An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'an vol. 6

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From Surah al-A’raf (7) verse 88 to Surah at-Tawbah (9)
The light of Islam has enlightened and continuing to enlighten every corner in the world and seekers of truth have closely associated to the Holy Quran which carries the Word of Allah (SWT) to humanity. With increasing focus and attention to the Holy Quran, efforts has been done to provide a pure, correct and accurate translation of this divine book. But sometimes it is difficult for the readers to understand all of the apparent and hidden meanings and it is the duty of every Muslim, man or woman, to read, understand and contemplate on the Holy Qur’an according to his own capacity. Hence, the need for proper explanation becomes obvious and necessary. The book titled, “An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur’an” compiled by a group of Muslim scholars, under the direction of Ayatullah Allamah Al-Hajj Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani is a valuable effort which presents a thorough commentary on the Quran in 20 volumes made available to the reader.

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Translator(s):

Sayyid Abbas Sadr-'ameli [5]

Topic Tags:

Qur'anic Exegesis (Tafsir) [6]

Introduction

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

“Verily the Qur'an doth guide to that which is most right (or stable) (to run societies), and giveth the glad tidings to the Believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a magnificent reward” [1].

“We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad tidings to Muslims"[2].

“When those come to thee who believe **in** ***Our Signs, say: 'Peace be on you: Your Lord hath inscribed for Himself (the rule on Mercy; verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented, and amended (his conduct), Lo! He is oft-forgiving, Most Merciful”***[3].

The light of Islam is illuminating hearts of individuals in nearly all parts of the world, in spite of heavy barriers and careful controls and religious interrogation exerted by not only many governments of non-Muslim nations, but also in some Muslim countries, against their believing people, especially during the years after the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

The effective influence of the light of the truth together with the speed in the movement of the Age has brought forth a more vital exchange of thought and religious ideology in connection with the Holy Qur'an.

In regard to this, we refer to what the Messenger of Allah (S) has said about it:

When afflictions surround you like the dark night refer to the Qur'an, because, it is an Intercessor whose intercession is accepted. It reports the evils (of people) which will be confirmed. It leads the person to Heaven who puts it in front of himself (follows it); and he who puts it behind himself (neglects it) will be driven to Hell.

This very Qur'an is the best guide to the best ways. It is a Book in *which there are useful explanations, statements and gaining (of goals). It is the Separator (of right and wrong).*[4]

Obviously, those people whose language is not Arabic can refer to the Holy Book in English, because this is an international language and it is possible for all nations with any native language, to read and understand it in English. As far as we know, there are more than 50 different English translations of Qur'an available in Iran alone, and probably others exist in libraries (and homes) throughout the world.

This makes it easy for the lovers of truth to obtain the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and Islamic ideology, through the medium of English, which formerly was acquired directly by the Arabic and Persian languages.

But, a fact should be mentioned here that not all of the words of Allah are easily understood by ordinary people and need explanatory commentary, i.e. 'Tafsir’.

Alongside this path, there are some problems that those eager to learn the Qur'anic truth should know and be careful of. Hence, we deal here with some of the difficulties we were involved in and recognized when we were preparing this endeavour; the fruit of our humble labour of more than three years, a translation of the commentary of over one section (of the 30 sections) of the Holy Qur'an from different commentary sources.

The work is based upon popular commentaries accepted by Muslim scholars. We consulted other books and present living scholars, learned in the Qur'anic Sciences for our work to produce this commentary in a simple standard of English easily understood by the laymen.

The style of writing here is a mixture of British-English and American-English, understandable for all the readers; even for those acquainted with only one of them. However, excuse us for using interchangeable spellings. If both are used, from time to time, they are acceptable; for example, honour and honor.

Not All English Versions of Quran Are Acceptable

Some Western translators of the Holy Qur'an; not all of them, and some producers of literature on Islam in the English language, are the anti-Muslim elements which are busy in distorting the facts about the faith to create disruption in Islamic ideology.

These hostile minds have attempted to black-list the Holy Prophet (S) and the religion of Islam, through their purposeful and subtle mis-translations, mis-interpretations, mis-representations and distortion of the facts.

The distortion and the misinterpretations are so skilfully decorated in linguistic excellence and delusive logic that the blind lovers of the English language, who are hardly or even totally unaware of the actual Qur'anic factors of their own faith, get caught up in the falsehood tempered with eloquence and they swallow the 'sugar-coated poisonous pills of deceit' allowing themselves to become duly conditioned to serve the purpose of the publications of the hostile camps.

The current standing of Evil has always been against the Truth in the history of man, even before written history, when the sons of Adam came into existence.

When these antagonistic elements have successfully extended their active influence upon our own religion, ideology and social tradition, we are also duty bound to Allah, His Final Word (the Holy Qur'an), the Faith, and to Islam, to do our best to present to every sincere seeker of Truth, a selection of a translation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an of the original Arabic text, and the 'Tafsir' (commentary) of them.

By the way, we believe that it is the essential belief of 'Shi'a' that the present Qur'an, that which is in our hands today, is the Holy Book of Allah, revealed to the holy Prophet Muhammad (S), as arranged and compiled during his lifetime and read out to him and it contains nothing less or more than what was revealed.

And it should be noted that,

"Nay, but it is a Glorious Qur'an, (inscribed) in a tablet preserved."[5]**,**

whose present arrangement is the order in which the various verses were sorted and arranged at the

command of the Holy Prophet (S), himself.

This is the uncorrupted or undisturbed Word of *Allah,* the preservation of which has been guaranteed by *Allah,* Himself:

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)"[6].

Furthermore, the English translations, along with the Arabic text of the verses, in this book, are selected from different translations of English versions of the Holy Qur'an, (whose names are listed at the end of the book under the title of **'References'**) which are from the best available sources in which some better styles and more proper meanings are employed. The translator and editor did their best to preserve this divine message and in conveying the Qur'anic facts in English.

In a few instances this writer, the translator, changed a word of those existing translations to a better one, from the existing material which was employed in this work.

What is a 'Commentary'?

A pure, correct, accurate translation of the Qur'an is necessary, but sometimes it is difficult for the readers to understand all of the apparent and hidden meanings and it is the duty of every Muslim, man or woman to read, understand and contemplate on the Holy Qur'an according to his own capacity:

"...read you, therefore, of the Qur'an as much as may be easy for you.."[7].

This reading has to be done not only with the tongue, voice and eyes; a mere recitation, but, also, with the best light that our intellect can supply, and even more, with the truest and purest light which our heart and conscience give us.

However, it is not always possible to fully understand the Holy Book as *Allah* says:

"That is indeed a Qur'an most honourable,"Which none shall touch but those who are purified"[8].

Thus, some additional information is needed. For example, it is sometimes necessary, for understanding the text, to refer to the particular occasion for the revelation of a particular verse; or to know the philological changes of a word used at the time of revelation or before it and the meaning that it has in Arabic, today.

Or the alphabetical symbols which evidently and undoubtedly are secrets, and especially the ambiguous /mutashabihat/; the knowledge of which has been announced to be with the /rasixuna fil 'ilm/; those deeply established in knowledge.

They are some things that only 'the particular ones, the sinless ones', besides the Prophet (S), himself,

viz, Ahlul-Bait, knew with all the Qur'anic facts and talked about them in their traditions and narrations (as He says:

"And whom We had taught knowledge from Our own Presence"[9].

For instance, the Apostle, himself, answered the questions which used to be asked by people as to the meaning of certain words in the verses revealed, or details of certain historical or spiritual matters on which they sought more enlightenment. These answers and explanations or in other words, the commentaries were gathered by some Companions /ashab/ and were afterward written down which are called 'Hadith' or 'traditions'.

Of course, the holy Prophet (S) had openly declared in Hadith-uth- Thaqalayn that the Qur'an is with the Ahlul-Bait, and to avoid going astray, the Muslims should be attached to these two. Later, the Ahlul-Bait's explanations and narrations, were added to them and together with the effect of expert religious scholars, in the past and present, established 'Exegesis' (explanation of Qur'an) which became a science in itself and was called 'Tafsir', commentary.

'Commentary' shows how every verse, or group of verses, were revealed to the holy Prophet (S) on a particular occasion, but which also has a general meaning. The particular occasion and the particular people concerned have passed away, but the general meaning and its application remain true for all time.

This is also one of the miracles of the Qur'an that with the help of 'commentary' it is always open and it is always new for those new generations to come.

The Current Commentary

As was mentioned earlier, the light of Islam is enlightening every corner in the world and seekers of truth, having referred to the translations of the Holy Qur'an, find that they need 'Tafsir', (commentary).

Some of them, Shi'a believers in particular have been led to this Center; Imam Ali (as) Library, requesting a clear, concise English Tafsir; 'a commentary of the Holy Qur'an'.

From the beginning of Islam until today (although many times the Holy Qur'an has been translated into English and a few of them are published with brief, detailed commentary, as footnotes, there has rarely been, as far as we know, a fairly complete commentary in English sufficient for them to find their answers. So the decision was made to supply this commentary.

Ayatullah Mujahed Al-Hajj, Allamah Sayyid Kamal Faqhih Imani, the founder and responsible party of this Islamic Scientific Research Center, approached us and reported the situation to scholars and appropriate research societies.

Then 12 people, who had varying nationalities and educational backgrounds, especially from the point of the English language and Islamic Theology, gathered. In their first gathering, which was held on 28th Safar, 1412 (1370 H. / 1991), they concluded that the commentary of the whole Qur'an which they intended to supply in English, would take many years to produce.

In order to quench the thirst of the lovers of Truth who had demanded it again and again, they decided to supply the commentary of the last section of the Qur'an, as a sample, and after its publication and receiving constructive comments by the readers and with a better skillfulness of the ones involved, the translation of the commentary would begin from the beginning of the Holy Qur'an.

Therefore, they thought it would be better that the sample, entitled **'An Enlightening Commentary Into the Light of the Holy Qur'an',** begin with Surah Insan, the end of the 29th Section, because the Qur'an was revealed for the improvement of Man and this Surah is about Man and his creation from a lowly life-germ which can develop unto the highest point where no other creature can ascend.

But, after several weeks the number of us dwindled to a handful and after some months, until the present, we remain two people; the translator and the editor. During this period of more than three years, a few people have tried their hands at this task to have a share in the translation, but, for different reasons, they were not successful.

However, we are completely grateful for their efforts and extend our thanks for their attempts, as well as to those who had any involvement in this work.

Attributes Needed for Working on This Kind of Commentary

This endeavour needed not only the knowledge and skillfulness in the English language, but also the knowledge of Arabic, and Islamic science and culture, because Tafsir is an attempt to analyze and explain the meaning of verses in the Holy Qur'an.

Moreover, Allah, Himself, says:

"We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims"[10].

Then, it needs that those involved know a little bit about almost all sciences and knowledge that human beings are concerned with when working with the commentary. Also, the phonetic sound systems of the two languages, English and Arabic, are different. Therefore, when an Arabic word from the Qur'an is mentioned in the English text, it is shown with the phonetic alphabet and in its special phonetical sign, i.e.: / /, to avoid using 'Arabic script' in the book, as far as possible.

A transliteration table of the Arabic letters and sounds and the corresponding phonetic signs, applied in this book, is given at the beginning of the book.

The Problems in Translating

We tried to avoid mixing up our own personal theories and conclusions with the interpretation of the text itself. With the help of Allah, we did our best; at times asking for guidance from some learned religious men (Ruhaniyan), and used all the knowledge and experience we possessed in the service of the Holy Qur'an for its commentary, hoping that *Allah* accepts it.

The nature of this sort of endeavour is so that, in the course of translation, some difficulties arise from various causes.

For instance, cultures in the Arabic language and English language are different so that some of the words like /amrun bayn al amrayn/ in the case of fatalism and freewill are nearly impossible to translate into English, because of the difference in the concept in English literature; or the meaning of a word like 'prostration', in English, is rather different with what /sajdah/ exactly means in Arabic.

In such cases, we selected the meaning of the words from among what the earlier commentators and phililogists used and where they were not unanimous, we also used the ideas of new writers, who had reasonable advantages in their interpretations, when the senses adopted with the commentary sources that we were taking and translating materials from. Explanations, of course are always helpful which we took benefit from, too.

It is noteworthy that there are some circumstances in the text, of the commentary, in which a verse or verses of Qur'an from other Suras rather than the Surah under discussion are mentioned as evidence or, thereby, for strengthening the idea.

The text of these verses and also the traditions and narrations from the holy Prophet or Ahlul-Bait (as) is printed in bolder type than the running commentary in order to distinguish, at a glance, the substance from the shadow. Also, the mentioned verses are generally taken from A. Yusuf Ali's translation.

It Was Only By His Merciful Will!

Translators Note

Both the editor and the translator have interesting factual stories to tell of how the way of this endeavour was paved by Providence and how they were divinely led to be absorbed into this task, Alhamdulillah. A few words given here in this regard are not to be misunderstood as a display of vanity for any peculiar distinction; for there is none.

It is purely to attract the attention of the readers to a living instance of the Providential implementation of the divine plan and how man drifts to his assignment and how matters are automatically manipulated, though, they seem yet only to be circumstantial.

"He said: Our Lord is He Who gave to each (created) thing its form and nature and further gave (it) guidance" [11].

For example, once, on a night, the writer of these lines, the translator, had seen in a dream that the Holy Qur'an, was placed, honourably, on a high position, wide open, high above a very great crowd of people amongst whom he was standing, watching. The full name of his was clearly written in the midst of the writings on the right page of it with magnificent bold letters.

The dream was obviously a good one, but it did not mean vividly to him at that time.

It was four years before he found out, in the course of translating the commentary of verses 11-16 from Surah 'Abasa No. 80, both the meaning of that dream and the cause of later changes in his career of twenty years, as a manager of a profitable Foreign Language Center, thanks to Allah.

It is always true what the Qur'an says:

"You will not unless Allah wills, surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise" [12].

By His graceful arrangement this writer was separated from his almost material gains, of this fleeting world, to be set toward the assured, perfect, pure, spiritual rewards of the next, everlasting world from Him, Allah willing, when he began translating the commentary of the Qur'an and entered this great Divine Ocean of light, he found out that from earlier times such a success had been appointed and bestowed to him by Allah.

Therefore, all changes and graceful arrangements directly are from Him and it was His helpful Will that planned His graceful design and showered the ability and insight upon us to lead us to the present point. We are eagerly in hopes that He will help us and guide us in all cases to complete the task successfully so that He accepts it from us.

Editor's Note

In my case, it is a fact that only by the grace of Allah have I come to be at the helm working, side-by-side with the translator, on this commentary of the Holy Qur'an. Editing and checking this translation of **'An Enlightening commentary into the Light of the Holy Quran'** has been a most important and rewarding experience for me.

To be of value in this work several things were necessary; my mother tongue, English, was almost at the top of the list. Then, having the ability to use a computer and printer, which involved me having to learn and use a Farsi program named Zarnegar, produced in Tehran, Iran, I was able to make use of the wonderful array of fonts it contains; necessary to type the Arabic and English languages.

Next, living in Iran, for four years, has made it possible for me to become acquainted with the native

language and customs. However, the greatest asset, of all, is that I am a Shi'a Muslim woman.

It is fifteen (15) years from now, that in America, I became enlightened to the existence of the Holy Qur'an and accepted it as a better way of life. Over this period of time it has put me in touch with the purity of the religion and the logical answers to the religious questions I had as a Catholic.

My father told us (during our childhood) that if we ever wanted to know anything we should go to the source and to always have the correct tools on hand to do the job right.

When I started hearing and seeing, on television, the upheaval of the Islamic Revolution, in Iran, and the speech of a brave and courageous man they called Ayatullah Khomeini, I became very intense on knowing why it was happening and in knowing who this man was who had been exiled and was making his return to his homeland.

"Our Lord! We have heard the call of one calling (us) to faith, 'Believe ye in the Lord,, and we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, blot out from us our iniquities, and take to Thyself our souls in the company of the righteous"[13].

It was something more spectacular than I had ever read about in my high school history books. There was a charge in it that I could not explain, and up until that time, I had never really heard anything about Islam, Prophet Muhammad or Muslims, for that matter.

I bought ***A. Yussuf Ali's English Translation of the Holy Qur'an,*** basing my decision on my father's counsel and I began from page one.

It was talking about the same things I had already learned; Adam and Eve in the Garden, disobeyed God due to the wiles of Satan and then, were expelled to Earth; Moses is given the scripture and leads his people out of Egypt, but they forfeited their covenant for a golden calf; Abraham, Ismail and Issac of the religion true, and there, Mary.

Hail Mary! Chaste, pure, chosen above other women, given glad tidings of a Word from Him; his name will be Christ Jesus, son of Mary, held in honor... [14]

And it went on: Practise charity, take care of the orphans, speak a speech that is just, beware of the deceits of the Unbelievers...I was in awe as I neared the end. No place was any obscenity found –no trace of ugliness which I found in the Bible –nothing but pure scripture; a complete religion, the one and only continuing from the first of Abraham. So, it became crystal clear to me that Islam is the final, refined message from God.

True, just, undeniable, containing what I had always felt and that is this: There is only One God; unique, needing no partner, powerful, and yet merciful and kind. How could God be more than one; Creator of such a vast universe and more?

With this understanding, though, came many tests to my new-found-faith; albeit necessary tests. Did I really believe - did I really submit to His Will - was I really worthy?

I began by only putting on a scarf, covering all of my hair.

"And say to the believing women...that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers..." [15]

Immediately the responses that I encountered proved the rightness of it all. I was chided, spit at, hit and cursed. Well, of course, a great deal of this was due to the propaganda which caused mass hysteria against Iran and not having their facts straight about the religion of Islam, however, it hurt just the same, but I had learned forgiveness and perseverance from my mother.

It was difficult for my family in the beginning; this change I was making, however, we are very close at heart, today, due to my faith and reliance on Allah.

"And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: 'My Lord! Bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.'" [16]

Almost at once the veils over my understanding fell away and I started rejecting a lot of the 'big-business' propaganda that had infiltrated into my life.

"Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error; whosoever rejects Evil and believes in God bath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks..." [17]

The 'Big Sell' eats away at the very fabric of human society to the point that life has only a superficial meaning and high value is put on every inanimate object which man can produce.

"The life of this world is alluring to those who reject faith, and they scoff at those who believe. But the righteous will be above them on the Day of Resurrection; for God bestows His abundance on whom He will " [18].

I had developed an intense desire to go to Iran--the country of martyrs; having an air so thick with emotions, direction and goal, at that time, and having the presence of an undeniable strength caressing it in the hands of an unseen power.

Ten years after I started practicing the tenets of Islam the opportunity presented itself for me to be able to fulfil my desire.

"Not equal are those Believers who sit (at home) and receive no hurt, and those who strive and fight in the cause...God has granted a grade higher to those who strive..." [19]

I wished very much to become involved in some type of work regarding the Holy Qur'an and in due time I was approached to work with a group of people on a commentary of the Holy Qur'an.

"***And for those who fear God, He prepares a way out" "And He provides for him from*** (***sources***) ***he never could imagine..."***[20]

Those of you who know anything about the rigors of editing know that it is very time-consuming and attention to detail is very necessary.

Spending many hours discussing the meaning of a single word, or phrase, can cause the ordinary soul to become frustrated, but that frustration is ultimately quelled when peace and tranquillity cover the heart at the point where there is that final agreement and gives those involved renewed enthusiasm to continue.

Sometimes you will notice more spacing than usual on a line or within the phonetic brackets (/ /), but this is due to the fact that the Zarnegar program is a Farsi program and it took much time trying to place the little phonetic line over, or the little dot under, the correct letter, because English is written from left to right and Farsi is written from right to left, so, I had a bit of anarchy on my hands for a time.

I leave you, now, in the hopes that you, too, will be provoked to question and seek. (Seek and you will find). Looking back, I feel that Allah does consider me worthy.

"God is the protector of those who have faith; from the depths of darkness He will lead them into light"[21].

Wa Salam.

1. 17:9
2. 16:89
3. 6:54
4. Usul al-Kafi, vol 2, p. 599.
5. 85:21, 22
6. 15:9
7. 73:20
8. 56:77, 79
9. 18:65
10. 16:89
11. 20:50
12. 76:30
13. 3:193
14. 3:42-45
15. 24:31
16. 17:24
17. 2:256
18. 2:212
19. 4:95
20. 65:2-3
21. 2:257

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By the way, it should be notified that for the translation of this volume, Tafsir Nemunah has been mainly utilized.

* * * *

يَأَيهَا النّاس قَدْ جَاءَكُم بُرْهَنٌ مِّن رّبِّكُمْ وَ أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُوراً مّبِيناً

"O mankind! Verily there has come to you a convincing proof (***the Messenger and the Qur'an***) ***from your Lord: for We have sent unto you a light*** (***that is***) ***manifest."***[1]

إِنّا نحْنُ نَزّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَ إِنّا لَهُ لحَفِظونَ

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message and We will assuredly Guard it (***from corruption***)***."***[2]

وَ مَنْ أَعْرَض عَن ذِكرِى فَإِنّ لَهُ مَعِيشةً ضنكاً وَ نحْشرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَعْمَى

"But whosoever turns away from My Message (***the Qur'an***)***, verily for him is a straitened toilsome life, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement".***[3]

وَ نُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَ رَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"And We send down** (**stage by stage**) **of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy for those who believe..."4

1. 4:174
2. 15:9
3. 20:124
4. 17:82

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A Presentation to Muslims

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ أَطِيعُواْ اللّهَ وَأَطِيعُواْ الرَّسُولَ وَأُوْلِي الأَمْرِ مِنكُ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficient, The Merciful

"O ye who believed! Obey Allah, and obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority among you". 1

(***'Those charged with authority'***

are only the twelve sinless Imams (as) and; at the time of occultation, Sources of Imitation, who are learned, pious, and just, should be referred to.)

في إكمال الدين في حديث عن جابر الجعفي عن جابر بن عبد الله الانصاري قال: قلت: يا رسول الله عرفنا الله ورسوله، فمن اولي الامر الذين قرن الله طاعتهم بطاعتك؟ فقال (ص) هم خلفائي يا جابر، وأئمة المسلمين بعدي أولهم علي بن أبي طالب، ثم الحسن والحسين، ثم علي بن الحسين، ثم محمد بن علي المعروف في التوراة بالباقر وستدركه يا جابر فإذا لقيته فاقرأه مني السلام. ثم الصادق جعفر بن محمد، ثم موسى بن جعفر، ثم علي بن موسى، ثم محمد بن علي، ثم علي بن محمد، ثم الحسن بن علي، ثم سميي وكنيي حجة الله في أرضه، وبقيته في عباده ابن الحسن بن علي، ذاك الذي يفتح الله على يديه مشارق الارض ومغاربها

In 'Ikmal-ud-Din' a tradition, through 'Jabir-il-Ju'fi', is narrated from Jabir-ibn- Abdillah thus:

I said:

"O Messenger of Allah, we have known Allah and His Apostle; then who is 'Ulil-Amr', those that Allah has made their obedience the same as your obedience?'

Then, the Prophet (S) said:

'O Jabir! they are, after me, my successors and the Guides of Muslims; the first of them is Ali-ibn-Abi Talib; then (Imam) Hassan, and (Imam) Husain; then Ali-ibn-il-Husain; then Muhammad-ibn-Ali, known in the Torah as Baqir, whom you will see.

O Jabir! When you visit him, give my regards to him. After him, there is Sadiq, -Ja'far-ibn-Muhammad; and after him Musa-ibn-Ja'far; then Ali-ibn-Musa; then Muhammad-ibn-Ali; then Ali-ibn-Muhammad, then Hassan-ibn-Ali; and after him (there comes) Al-Gha'im whose name and sir-name is the same as mine. He is Allah's Authority on the Earth and His Remainder amongst His servants.

*He is the son of (Imam) Hassan-ibn-Ali (a.-Askari). This is the very personality by whose hands Allah will open the Easts and Wests of the world.'*2

"قال الله تعالى: "وما ينطق عن الهوى إن هو إلا وحي يوحى

"Nor does the Apostle speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed".3

قال النبي (ص): "إني تارك فيكم التقلين، كتاب الله حبل ممدود من السماء إلى الأرض وعترتي أهل بيتي، وإن اللطيف الخبير أخبرني أنهما لن يفترقا حتى يردا علي الحوض فانظروا بماذا تخلفوني" وفي حديث آخر: "لن تضلوا "ما إن تمسكتم بهما

The Prophet (S) said:

"I leave behind me two weighty (very worthy and important) things:

The book of Allah (i.e. the Quran), which is a stretched string from the heaven to the earth, and my progeny, my Ahlul-Bait; for verily Allah, The Merciful, The Aware, informed me that never, never, will these Two get separated from each other until they meet me at the Houd of Kauthar (the Pond of Abundance).

Therefore, be careful and contemplate on how you will treat them (after me)"

...and in another tradition it is added:

*"Never, never, shall you get astray if you attach yourself to these two".*4

Abul-Hassan-ir-Rida (as) said:

"May the Mercy of Allah be upon the servant who Keeps alive our commandment".

I asked him (as) how the one could keep your commandment alive.

He (as) said:

"He (can) learn our sciences and teach them to people. In fact if people knew (the merits) and goodnesses of our speech, surely they would follow us." 5

1. 4:59
2. Ikmal-ud-Din, Vol. 1, p. 253; with nearly similar meaning, in Yanabi-ul-Mawaddah, p. 117
3. 53:3,4
4. Ma'uni-ul-Akhbur, p. 90, tradition 2, & Musnad Ahmad-ibn-Hanbal, Vol. 3, p.17, and other books from the Sunnite School and Shi 'ah School mentioned in Ihqaq-ul-Haqq, Vol 9, p. 309 to 375
5. Ma' ani-ul-Akhbar, p. 180 & 'Uyun-i-Akbar-ur-Rida, Vol. 1, p. 207

Surah al-'Araf, Chapter 7, Section 11 cont..

Surah al-'Araf , Verse 88

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَا شُعَيْبُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَكَ مِن قَرْيَتِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا ۚ قَالَ أَوَلَوْ كُنَّا كَارِهِينَ

88. ***"The chiefs of the arrogant among his people said: 'We will surely expel you, O Shu'ayb, and those who believe with you from our town, unless you return into our creed.' He (Shu'ayb) said: 'what, even though we dislike (it)?'"***

All prophets have been threatened to be expelled and banished. This is the logic of force. Surah 'Ibrāhim, No. 14, verse 14 says:

"And those who disbelieved said to their apostles: 'We will most certainly drive you forth from our land, so else you shall come back into our religion..."

The chiefs of the arrogant have always been the first enemies of prophets. The verse says:

"The chiefs of the arrogant among his people said..."

The method of prophets is logic and reasoning, but the style of disbelievers is force and threat.

The preachers of religion should not be afraid of the opponents' threads, since there have always been threat and banishment in this way. The disbelievers told their prophet:

"...'We will surely expel you, O Shu'ayb..."

Yet, be careful to use a kind word, politely and wisely, when you confront the ignorances of disbelievers. Shu'ayb answered them:

“...He (Shu‘ayb) said: ‘what, even though we dislike (it)?’”

Surah al-‘Araf , Verse 89

قَدِ افْتَرَيْنَا عَلَى اللّهِ كَذِباً إِنْ عُدْنَا فِي مِلَّتِكُمْ بَعْدَ إِذْ نَجَّانَا اللّهُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَكُونُ لَنَآ أَنْ نَعُودَ فِيهَآ إِلاَّ أَنْ يَشَآءَ اللّهُ رَبُّنَا
وَسِعَ رَبُّنا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْماً عَلَى اللّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا رَبَّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ

89. ***“We should have forged a lie against Allah if we returned into your creed after Allah delivered us from it. It is not for us to return into it, unless Allah, our Lord, (so) will. Our Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge. In Allah we have put our trust. Our Lord! Decide between us and our people with truth, and You are the best of deciders.”***

The Qur’ānic term /millat/ has sometimes been used with the meaning of religion and creed.

Since the followers of Shu‘ayb had accepted their religion based upon reasoning and proof, (not upon desires), then they would not abandon it. Allah never commands upon returning to infidelity and paganism.

He who returns from His command, surely the amount of his deed is so little that the one regrets from his action, while Allah is not like that and He never reviews the religion. The verse says:

“We should have forged a lie against Allah if we returned into your creed after Allah delivered us from it...”

The Qur’ānic term /fath/ and /fātih/, in these aspects, mean: ‘judgement and arbitration’.

The final word is said by Allah, in order that they might be delivered from this blind, and the path be paved.

Therefore, opposite to the evil suggestions of the enemies, we must trust on Allah and show our conclusiveness.

Never a believer is ready to collude on his beliefs, and he never returns from the Truth. Turing back and retrogression is forbidden for a true Muslims. The verse says:

“...It is not for us to return into it, unless Allah, our Lord, (so) will...”

It is for this reason that we must submit the command of Allah and obey it.

Do not forget to observe discipline and courtesy in speech. Instead of curse, invoke Allah the just arbitration.

“...Our Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge. In Allah we have put our trust. Our Lord!

Decide between us and our people with truth…"

In supplication, the relationship between the demand and the Divine Names should be considered.

We are in need of triumph and, therefore, we call Him saying:

"…and You are the best of deciders."

Surah al-‘Araf , Verses 90-91

وَقَالَ الْمَلأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتُمْ شُعَيْباً إِنَّكُمْ إِذاً لَخَاسِرُونَ

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَاثِمِينَ

90*. "And the chiefs of those who disbelied from among his people said: 'If you follow Shu‘ayb, you will indeed be losers'."*
91*. "Then the earthquake seized them, so they became motionless bodies in their dwellings."*

In this verse, the term /rajfah/ (earthquake) has been used for the punishment of those people, while in Surah Hūd, No. 11, verse 94 the word /sayhah/ (rumbling) has been applied, and in Surah Ash-Shu‘arā, No. 26, verse 189 the phrase ***"…the punishment of the day of cloud…"***, which is a covering produced by an annihilating cloud, is mentioned as their torment.

This shows that the earthquake of their chastisement had been accompanied with rumbling and an annihilating dark cloud.

The Arabic term /jāthim/is derived from /jathm/ which means: to sit upon the knee and to stay in one place. As if, the punishment seized them at night when they were asleep. They woke up, but they had neither enough time to save themselves nor any ability to escape. So, they were destroyed while they were in the state of half-raised.

Most of the opponents of divine prophets were from the kind of rich notables.

"And the chiefs of those who disbelied from among his people said…"

One of the methods of disbelievers is threat by means of economical siege.

"…'If you follow Shu‘ayb, you will indeed be losers'."

When they became like that, they increased their own aberration by persisting on leading others astray. There was no hope that they might believe. Therefore, basing on the decree of the law of effacing the

effects of corruption, the divine punishment fell upon them. The verse says:

"Then the earthquake seized them, so they became motionless bodies in their dwellings."

Surah al-'Araf , Verse 92

الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْباً كَأَن لَمْ يَغْنَوْا فِيهَا الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْباً كَانُوا هُمُ الْخَاسِرِينَ

92. *"Those who belied Shu'ayb became (perished) as if they had never dwelt therein. Those who belied Shu'ayb were themselves the losers."*

The Arabic term /yaqnau/, used in this verse, is derived from /�qin� / which means: 'to dwell in a place'.

The great loss belongs to the idolaters. Instead of belief in one God, they ascribe partners, and instead of accepting the guidance of the immaculates, they refer to others supposing to be led.

Therefore, instead of a secured life, they will be destroyed of everything; and instead of being admitted into Heaven, they will enter Hell Fire, since, instead of Allah's pleasure, they have incurred His Wrath.

Thus, the plots of the people of Shu'ayb, who were the followers of falsehood, were of no avail. They wanted to expel Shu'ayb from their town, but they themselves were destroyed in their own houses.

That is why that sometimes it happens that the places of refuge change to places of massacre. (The town of the people of Shu'ayb, for example, was a pleasant place for them and also it was used as a means of threat against Shu'ayb by them. But that town was ruined upon them and became a means of their destruction.

It is at the time of incurring the Wrath of Allah that the real losers are recognized. The above verse is its Qur'�nic evidence. It says:

"Those who belied Shu'ayb became (perished) as if they had never dwelt therein. Those who belied Shu'ayb were themselves the losers."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 93

فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالاَتِ رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ فَكَيْفَ ءَاسَى عَلَى قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ

93. *"So he turned away from them, and said: 'O' my people! I have delivered to you the messages of my Lord, and advised you sincerely; so how shall I then grieve for a disbelieving people?'"*

Again, for a more intensive emphasis, it says that those who belied Shu'ayb were the losers, not those

who believed in him. Thus, such people are addressed in the holy verse as follows:

“So he turned away from them, and said: ‘O’ my people! I have delivered to you the messages of my Lord, and advised you sincerely...”

When Shu‘ayb saw them in the threshold of chastisement and destruction, he hopelessly turned away from them, and told them that he had conveyed the messages of Allah to them and had advised them, but refusing his words, they did not hearken to him.

That is, that punishment was very hard and painful, but they were deserve to incur it as a result of the crimes they had committed.

“...So how shall I then grieve for a disbelieving people?’”

Then Suh‘ayb, in a positive interrogation with a negative sense, said why he should grieve for a people who disbelieved and incurred the punishment of Allah for themselves. This statement means that he said he did not grieve for them.

Thus Shu‘ayb consoles himself, because he had made his best and applied all the necessary efforts to guide aright those people. But, alas, they disobeyed arrogantly and that torment was their recompense.

Section 12: Warning With the Punishment

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 94

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِنْ نَبِيٍّ إِلاَّ أَخَذْنَآ أَهْلَهَا بِالْبَأْسَآءِ وَالضَّرَّآءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضَّرَّعُونَ

94. ***“And We did not send a prophet in any town but We vertook its people with distress and affliction hat they might humble themselves.”***

The Qur’□nic term /ba’s□’/ means some calamities which reach the soul, like death; while the term /darr□’/ means: financial damages. 1

As an Allah’s way of treatment, there are some bitter events and calamities for all nations.

It is noteworthy that difficulties and hardships are usually some functional factors in removing neglectfulness and in training man. Also, calamities are not always the Wrath of Allah. They are sometimes the grace of Allah in the form of misfortunes.

(Like some iron which, as a result of being heated in the furnace, becomes soft and changeable into different shapes. Afflictions cause man to be mild, too.) Difficulties also make Man humiliate and supplicate.

The verse says:

"And We did not send a prophet in any town but We overtook its people with distress and affliction that they might humble themselves."[2]

Imam Sadiq (as) in a tradition said:

"Allah, Almighty and Glorious, said: 'When the one who has known Me disobeys Me, I will set up, as an absolute master over him, the one who has not known Me'." [3]

Hadrat abul-Hassan-il-Hādi, the tenth Imam (as) has said:

"Verily Allah has a caller who calls every day and night 'O' servants of Allah! Stop! stop sinning Allah! If there were not grazing animals, milking babies, and (in prayer) bowing aged ones, there would be showered a punishment over you by which you might be severely bruised'."[4]

Surah al-'Araf , Verse 95

ثُمَّ بَدَّلْنَا مَكَانَ السَّيِّئَةِ الْحَسَنَةَ حَتَّىٰ عَفَوا وَّقَالُوا قَدْ مَسَّ آبَاءَنَا الضَّرَّاءُ وَالسَّرَّاءُ فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

95. *"Then We altered the ill (circumstances) to good, until they multiplied, and said: 'Distress and happiness did indeed touch our fathers'. So We seized them suddenly while they did not perceive."*

The Arabic term /'afau/, mentioned in this verse, means 'the abundance of wealth and children'. The grace of Allah reached to be full unto them, but they did not become aware nor did they take an example.

A nearly similar meaning to this statement is recited in Surah Al-'An'ām, No. 6, verse 44, where it says:

"Then, when they forgot that which they had been admonished to, We opened the doors of all things (of enjoyments), until when they rejoiced in what they were given, We seized them suddenly when, behold, they were in utter dispair."

The case is similar to the condition of a sick person whose physician becomes disappointed of him to be healed. Then he tells the people around him that they let him eat everything he wishes, because it is indifferent for the diseased person, and he is passing away.

However, as some commentators have said, there may also be another meaning for this verse. That meaning is that, after the removal of difficulties, the following generation said that bitter events were for their fathers and these offsprings were in security.

They were neglectful that Allah's way of treatment in seizing people encompasses all generations, and such negligences are the secret of the Wrath of Allah.

Therefore, passing by the bitter and sweet incidents heedlessly, and taking no example of them, brings forth the Wrath of Allah thereafter. This status is a sign of unawareness in such people.

"...while they did not perceive."

Not every kind of welfare and happiness is a sign of the Grace of Allah. They may sometimes prepare the field for the Wrath of Allah. The verse says:

"Then We altered the ill** (**circumstances**) **to good, until they multiplied..."

Sometimes it happens that the welfare of a person causes his neglectfulness and his disobedience from the command of Allah (s.w.t).

"...and said: 'Distress and happiness did indeed touch our fathers'..."

Most of those who fail in the Divine trials are the rich and the people who are in welfare, not the deprived ones.

It should also be noted that the Wrath of Allah does not inform men when it has to come, but it comes suddenly.

The verse says:

"...So We seized them suddenly while they did not perceive."

Surah al-'Araf, Verse 96

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَى ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَرَكَاتٍ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ وَالأَرْضِ وَلَكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

96. ***"And if the people of the towns had believed and kept from evil, We would have certainly opened up for them blessings from the heaven and the earth, but they belied; so We seized them for what they used to earn."***

The Arabic term /barakāt/ is the plural form of /barakah/. It is applied for the fix and continual favours. On the contrary, there are some fleeting things in the senses of blessing, plurality of good and its multiplication. Blessings include both material and spiritual bounties, like blessings in lifetimes, in

knowledge, and in books.

The verse says:

"And if the people of the towns had believed and kept from evil, We would have certainly opened up for them blessings from the heaven and the earth..."

It implies that if the people of the towns, who were destroyed because of denial and disobedience, had testified the Divine prophets and had avoided polytheism and sinning, Allah would have bestowed upon them the increasing blessings from the heaven and the earth by means of rain and abundance of plants and fruits.

Noah also promised his people if they believed, the blessings of heaven would be sent down unto them.

Some commentators say that blessings of the heaven, mentioned in this holy verse, refer to the supplications which are answered, and the blessings of the earth are the fulfilment of the requests.

The verse continues saying:

"...but they belied; so We seized them for what they used to earn."

That is, they rejected the divine prophets, and Allah punished them for the recompense of their disobediences, oppositions, and belying the prophets by ceasing rain from them, and, consequently, the blessings of the earth were restrained from them.

Surah al-'Araf, Verses 97-98

أَفَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَى أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا بَيَاتاً وَهُمْ نَآئِمُونَ

أَوَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَى أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا ضُحًى وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ

97. ***"What! do the people of the towns then feel secure from Our punishment coming upon them by night while they are sleeping?"***

98. ***"What! do the people of the towns feel secure from Our punishment coming upon them in daylight while they are playing?"***

It questions whether the people of towns, who reject the prophets, are secure from the punishment of Allah when it comes down upon them while they are asleep at night, the same as it befell upon the former people.

The verse says:

“What! do the people of the towns then feel secure from Our punishment coming upon them by night while they are sleeping?”

Again, it questions whether the people of towns are secure from the punishment of Allah when it seizes them at the day time while they are busy doing some vain affairs.

The verse says:

“What! do the people of the towns feel secure from Our punishment coming upon them in daylight while they are playing?”

It is evident that whoever is busy with the mere affairs of this world and does not heed the affairs of Hereafter is in vain and, as if, he is playing around.

The purpose of the Qur’ānic phrase ‘the people of the towns’ is any group of people who are busy with some useless affairs, and who reject divine prophets, and they refrain worshipping One God.

The occasion of revelation of these two verses, of course, was the obstinacies of the pagans of Mecca.

Surah al-‘Araf , Verse 99

أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللّهِ فَلا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللّهِ إِلاَّ الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

99*. “What! Do they then feel secure from Allah’s plan* (*sudden punishment*)*? But none feels secure from Allah’s plan save the people* (*who are*) *losers.”*

The verse begins thus:

“what! do they then feel secure from Allah’s plan* (*sudden punishment*)*?...”

The verse implies whether these disbelieving people are secure when the divine punishment befalls them so that they do not understand.

The reason that the divine punishment is called here ‘plan’ is that it seizes them in a way that they do not know it and they do not understand it.

A plan, or plot, usually attacks the opposite party unawares.

The verse continues saying:

“...But none feels secure from Allah’s plan save the people* (*who are*) *losers.”

That is, except the people who are losers, and they do not know it, no one feels secure from the plan of Allah.

The purpose of this verse is to attract the attention of the responsible ones to be careful and attentive that they should be afraid of Allah’s punishment, and they should obey Him. Never should they promise themselves security from that punishment, otherwise they will be involved in chastisement both in this world and Hereafter.

1. Tafs□r-i-Furq□n
2. For more details upon the meaning of the Qur’□nic terms /ba’s□’/ and /darr□’/, refer to the commentary of Surah Al-’An‘□m, No. 6, verse 42, vol. 5, p. 124 the current English version series of commentary of the Holy Qur’□n.
3. ’Us□l-i-K□fi, part 3, p. 378
4. ’Us□l al-K□fi, part 3, p. 378

Section 13: The Ministry of Moses

Surah al-‘Araf , Verse 100

أَوَ لَمْ يَهْدِ لِلَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الاَرْضَ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَهْلِهَآ أَنْ لَوْ نَشَآءُ أَصَبْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَنَطْبَعُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لاَيَسْمَعُونَ

100. ***“Does He not guide*** (***thereby***) ***those who inherit the earth after its*** (***former***) ***residents that if We please We will destroy them*** (***too***) ***for their sins and set a seal on their hearts so that they do not hear*** (***the truth***)***?”***

Once more in this verse, in order to awaken the neglectful minds of the present people, and making them attentive of the instructive lessons which had existed in the lives of the former nations, the Qur’□n inquires whether those who inherit the earth next to the possessors of it did not take admonition from the study of the situation of the former nations.

They should understand that if Allah pleases, He is able to destroy them, too, for their faults, and inflicts them with the same evil end that the former sinners suffered.

The verse says:

“Does He not guide (***thereby***) ***those who inherit the earth after its*** (***former***) ***residents that if We please We will destroy them*** (***too***) ***for their sins…”***

Allah is also able to leave them alive, while, because of their committing sins and corruptions, He seals their hearts and let them not perceive and recognize the truth, so that they never hear the truth and do

not accept any advice. Such people will be wandering in the life bewildered. The verse says:

"...and set a seal on their hearts so that they do not hear (the truth)?"

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 101

تِلْكَ الْقُرَىٰ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنبَائِهَا ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِمَا كَذَّبُوا مِن قَبْلُ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ الْكَافِرِينَ

101. ***"These are the towns some of whose tidings We recount unto you; and certainly their Messengers came to them with manifest proofs, but they would not believe in what they had belied from before. Thus does Allah set a seal on the hearts of the infidels."***

In this verse, as well as the next one, the emphasis is again on the lessons which can be taken from the explanation of the former people's events. But, here, the addressee is the Prophet (S), although the objective is indeed all human beings.

At first, it says:

"These are the towns some of whose tidings We recount unto you..."

Then, the verse implies that it was not such that they became unnihilated without completing the argument, but surely their divine prophets went to them with clear evidences and those prophets tried their utmost effort to guide them. The holy verse continues saying:

"...and certainly their Messengers came to them with manifest proofs..."

But they steadily showed opposition against the continuous preaches and repeated invitations of their prophets and persisted on their own saying. They were not ready to accept and believe in that which they had belied before. Here is what the verse says:

"...but they would not believe in what they had belied from before..."

The cause of this obstinacy has been stated in the next sentence of the holy verse, as follows:

"...Thus does Allah set a seal on the hearts of the infidels."

That is, those who step in the path of wrong, as a result of repetition and continuation of action, some corruptions such as perversion, infidelity, and impurity settle in their hearts so deeply that they remain fixed therein like the curvings upon a coin. This is from the kind of effect and property of action which has been attributed to Allah, since it is He Who is the Cause of all causes.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 102

وَمَا وَجَدْنَا لأَكْثَرِهِمْ مِنْ عَهْدٍ وإِنْ وَجَدْنَآ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفَاسِقِينَ

102. ***“And, We did not find in most of them any*** (***firm***) ***covenant, and verily We found most of them to be wrong-doers.”***

The objective meaning of the word “***ahd***’, (covenant), mentioned in the verse, is either the relation between Allah and the sound innate disposition of people, or the invitation and laws of prophets, or the special covenants which sometimes people made with prophets saying that, for example, if the prophet performed so and so as a miracle or solved a particular difficulty of theirs, they would believe.

One of the evidences of this kind in the Qur’ān is Surah’A‘rāf, No. 7, verses 134 and 135 which say:

“And when the plague fell upon them, they said: ‘O’ Moses! invoke your Lord for us by the covenant He has made with you. If you remove the plague from us, we will certainly believe in you, and we will certainly send with you the Children of Israel’.”
“But when We removed the plague from them until a term which they should reach, behold, they broke (***their promise again***).***”***

Allah has made manifest some facts for human beings through both innate disposition and prophets in order that they may have confederation and submission unto them. But most people neglect the cry of innate dispostion and prophets, and going out of the path of the truth, they become wrong-doers. The verse says:

“And, We did not find in most of them any (***firm***) ***covenant…”***

Thus, the secret of the destruction of the former nations was breach of promise and disobedience.

“…and verily We found most of them to be wrong-doers.”

Allah has praised the faithful and blamed the breachers of promise.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 103

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مُوسَى بِآيَاتِنَآ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَظَلَمُوا بِها فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

103. ***“Then, after them, We sent Moses with Our Signs unto Pharaoh and his chiefs, but they wronged*** (***and disbelieved***) ***in them. Consider then how the end of the mischief makers was! ”***

The name of Moses (as) has been repeated more than 130 times in the Qur’ān. No other name has been mentioned therein as numerous as his name. As it is cited in Al-Mizān, the, the Qur’ān has referred to the divine miracles concerning no prophet as many as it has mentioned for Moses (as).

The story of Moses (as), mentioned in the Qur’ān, can be staged into five steps:

1) The birth and childhood of Moses.
2) His escape from the city of Madyan and living with Shuaib (Jethro).
3) His mission and his problems with Pharaoh.
4) His own deliverance and that of his people from Pharaoh, and returning to Palestine.
5) His conflicts with the Children of Israel.

This Surah, Al-’A‘rāf, is the first Meccan Surah which has referred to the story of Moses (as).

One of the philosophies of the mission of prophets is standing against false deities. For general improvement of a society, the chiefs and great members of that society should be referred to first, because water must be purified from its head-source, as the verse says:

“Then, after them, We sent Moses with Our Signs unto Pharaoh and his chiefs...”

People’s faith in the truth usually causes their society to be improved, while disbelief and heresy draw it towards corruption. The verse continues saying:

“...but they wronged (and disbelieved) in them. Consider then how the end of the mischief makers was! ”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 104

وَقَالَ مُوسَى يَافِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّي رَسُولٌ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

104. *"And Moses said: ‘O Pharaoh! Verily I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds’."*

Prophets claimed nothing but their prophecy and invitation to the Truth. In the way of their invitation, they used to address the false deities of their time bravely and without any fear and opposed them.

" And Moses said: ‘O Pharaoh! Verily I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds’."

To improve the society which has a regular system, it is better to begin from the chiefs of that society.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 105

حَقِيقٌ عَلَى أَنْ لاَ أَقُولَ عَلَى اللّهِ إِلاَّ الْحَقَّ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِبَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعِيَ بَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ

105. ***"(I am) worthy of saying nothing about Allah except the truth. Indeed I have come to you with a clear Sign (a miracle) from your Lord; so send forth with me the Children of Israel."***

Prophets are infallible, and they say nothing but the truth. From the tongue of Moses, the verse says:

"(I am) worthy of saying nothing about Allah except the truth..."

Prophets should have miracles to prove their prophecy, as the verse refers to it and says:

"...Indeed I have come to you with a clear Sign (a miracle) from your Lord..."

To provide the freedom of human beings is among the first aims of prophets. Except them, whoever takes the rein of the government in a society, drags those people into servitude of false deities.

As long as people are not delivered from the ties of false deities, it is not possible to offer them a complete cultural program to guide them. That was why Moses (as) said to Pharaoh:

"...so send forth with me the Children of Israel."

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 106-107

قَالَ إِنْ كُنْتَ جِئْتَ بِآيَةٍ فَأْتِ بِهَآ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُبِينٌ

106. ***"He (Pharaoh) said: 'If you have come with a Sign (a miracle), then bring it, if you are of the truthful ones'."***
107. ***"So he threw his rod, then behold! it was a clear serpent."***

The Definition of a Miracle

The Arabic term /mu'jizah/ is derived from the root /'ajaza/ which means an action that those who have not the capacity and genius of prophethood or imamate are unable to do it, such as the act of Moses by his Rod, or the act of Jesus in raising men from the dead, and so on. The verse says:

"He (Pharaoh) said: 'If you have come with a Sign (a miracle), then bring it, if you are of the truthful ones'."

In *Surah Ash-Shu'ar�, No. 26, verse 45* we recite:

“Then Moses cast down his staff, and lo! It swallowed that which they falsely displayed.”

There were also some more miracles appeared from that Rod. It was struck the water of the sea when it dried up. *Surah Ash-Shu‘arā, No. 26, verse 63* says:

“Strike the sea with your staff…”

Or, it was struck the rock and fountains of water gushed forth from it. *Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 60* says:

“…Strike the rock with your staff.’…”

It should be explained that at the presence of Moses (as) the Rod changed to be a small snake, as *Surah An-Naml, No. 27, verse 10* says:

“And cast down your staff, so when he saw it in motion as if it was a serpent…”

At the presence of people it seemed an ordinary snake. *Surah Tāhā, No. 20, verse 20* says:

“Then he cast it down, and lo! it was a serpent running.”

But, at the presence of Pharaoh, it became a great clear snake, as the verse under discussion says:

“So he threw his rod, then behold! it was a clear serpent.”

However, a miracle should be clear for all, so that no doubt remains. The verse says:

“…then behold! it was a clear serpent.”

Section 14: Pharaoh and His Magicians Defeated

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 108-109

وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنَّاظِرِينَ

قَالَ الْمَلأُ مِنْ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّ هَذَا لَسَاحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ

108. ***“Then he drew out his hand, and behold! It was white to the beholders.”***

109. *"The chiefs of Pharaoh's people said: 'Verily this indeed is a knowing sorcerer'."*

Besides warnings and changing the Rod as a serpent, Moses showed white hand, too. But the opponents of the prophets used to spoil the rank of the prophets. The verse says:

"Then he drew out his hand, and behold! it was white to the beholders."

Therefore, the adherents and the chiefs of wrong-doers around false deities are also shared with them in their crimes. The verse says:

"The chiefs of Pharaoh's people said: 'Verily this indeed is a knowing sorcerer'."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 110

يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِنْ أَرْضِكُمْ فَمَاذَا تَأْمُرُونَ

110. *"'He (Moses) intends to expel you from your land. Then what do you advise?'"*

In order to pervert the common opinions, Pharaoh tried to denigrate Moses **(as)**. From the point of belief, he called Moses (as) a sorcerer, and from the social and political points of view, he introduced him as a seditious and quarrelsome person. One of the weapons of the opponents is to denigrate the men of the Truth. The verse, from the tongue of Pharaoh, says:

"'He (Moses) intends to expel you from your land..."

False deities are often tyrannical, but sometimes they become helpless to consult in difficulties with some others around them.

"...Then what do you advise?'"

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 111-112

قَالُوا أَرْجِهِ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَرْسِلْ فِي الْمَدَآئِنِ حَاشِرِينَ

يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سَاحِرٍ عَلِيمٍ

111. *"They said (unto Pharaoh): 'Keep him and his brother in suspense (for a while); and send men to the cities to collect (sorcerers),"*
112. *"To bring you every knowing (expert) sorcerer'."*

In their consultation, however, the attitude of all of them was that they told him to keep Moses and Aaron (as) in suspense in order to collect sorcerers. The verse says as follows:

"They said (unto Pharaoh): 'Keep him and his brother in suspense (for a while); and send men to the cities to collect (sorcerers),"

This device was for the reason that they would call all knowledgeable skillful experts of the time in sorcery to be gathered and to be brought to the presence of Pharaoh. The verse says:

"To bring you every knowing (expert) sorcerer'."

Since haste in slaying Moses and Aaron, regarding Moses' two surprising miracles, would cause the attraction of the attention of many people to him, and the feature of his 'prophethood' might be strengthened with the feature of 'martyrdom and being oppressed', at first they thought that they would frustrate his deeds by means of some extraordinary actions of their sorcerers, and defame him.

After that, they should slay him so that the story of Moses and Aaron could disappear from the minds of people forever.

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 113-114

وَجَآءَ الْسَّحَرَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ قَالُوا إِنَّ لَنا لاَجْراً إِنْ كُنّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ

قَالَ نَعَمْ وإِنَّكُمْ لَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ

113. ***"And the sorcerers came to Pharaoh, they said: 'Verily there will be a reward for us if we are victors'."***

114. ***"He said: 'Yes! and you will surely be of the near-stationed (to me)'."***

From this verse on, the words are upon the entanglement of Moses with the sorcerers and the end of his struggle therein.

The verse implies that, by the invitation of Pharaoh, sorcerers went to him, and the first thing that they told him was that whether they would have a large reward if they could overcome the enemy. Here is the verse:

"And the sorcerers came to Pharaoh, they said: 'verily there will be a reward for us if we are victors'."

Immediately after that, Pharaoh also gave them a favorable promise, and said that not only he would

give them a good financial reward but also they would be of the near-stationed to him. The verse says:

"He said: 'Yes! and you will surely be of the near-stationed (to me)'."

Thus, Pharaoh promised them both the reward of wealth and the reward of high rank.

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 115-116

قَالُوا يَامُوسَى إِمَّآ أَنْ تُلْقِيَ وَإِمَّآ أَنْ نَكُونَ نَحْنُ الْمُلْقِينَ

قَالَ أَلْقُوا فَلَمَّآ أَلْقَوْا سَحَرُوا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ وَاسْتَرْهَبُوهُمْ وَجَآءُو بِسِحْرٍ عَظِيمٍ

115. *"They (the sorcerers) said: 'O' Moses! Will you throw, or shall we be the (first) throwers?'"*
116. *"He (Moses) said: 'Throw (yours) !' So when they threw, they bewitched the people's eyes and terrified them and produced a great magic."*

Finally, a proper time was appointed for the meeting of Moses (as) and the sorcerers to have their attempts. So all people were invited to come and see the event.

When the appointed day came, the sorcerers were completely ready with all their tools for the action. They had supplied some ropes and staffs which, it seemed, they had been filled with some special chemical materials. These materials could be changed into the form of some light gases before sunshine which could move those ropes and hollow staffs.

It was a wonderful scene. Moses, standing before people and the sorcerers, was alone. Only his brother, Aaron, was with him. The sorcerers told Moses either he would begin the action and cast his means first, or they might start and cast their own means. The verse in this regard says:

"They (the sorcerers) said: 'O' Moses! Will you throw, or shall we be the (first) throwers?'"

Moses, with a particular coolness, answered them that they could begin first. The verse says:

"He (Moses) said: 'Throw (yours)!...'

When the sorcerers threw down their ropes and other means on the ground, they fascinated people and, by their deceitful deeds and exaggerative statements, they cast a sudden fear and terror upon people, and caused a great sorcery to be produced before them. The verse says:

"...So when they threw, they bewitched the people's eyes and terrified them and produced a great magic."

The Arabic term /sihr/ means: 'deceit, imposture, dexterity, and jugglery'. Sometimes it also means: 'whatever the cause and motive of which is invisible'. The verse says:

"...and produced a great magic."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 117

وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَى مُوسَى أَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ فإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ

117*. "And We revealed to Moses: 'Throw down your rod!' And behold, it swallowed (all) that they falsely had invented."*

At the moment when all people were excited, and happy shouts were heard from every side, Pharaoh and his by-standers were watching the scene of activities of sorcerers, while they were smiling contently and their eyes were glittering with joy.

Then suddenly the Divine revelation came unto Moses (as), biding him to throw down the staff. It caused the scene to be changed wholly. The faces of audience lost their colour, and instability overtook Pharaoh and his adherents.

In this verse, the Qur'ān refers to the very fact. It implies that Allah revealed to Moses (as) to throw down his Rod. It became as a huge serpent which quickly and precisely gathered all false snakes and artificial means of the sorcerers. The holy verse says:

"And We revealed to Moses: 'Throw down your rod!' And behold, it swallowed (all) that they falsely had invented."

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 118-120

فَوَقَعَ الْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَاكَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

فَغُلِبُوا هُنَالِكَ وَانْقَلَبُوا صَاغِرِينَ

وَأُلْقِيَ الْسَّحَرَةُ سَاجِدِينَ

118*. "So the truth was established and what they were doing was made vain."*

119*. "Thus were they there defeated and brought low."*

120. ***"And the sorcerers fell down in prostration."***

It was thus that the truth was manifested and the acts of sorcerers, which were baseless and improper, were nollified. The verse says:

"So the truth was established and what they were doing was made vain."

The reason of this incident was that the deed of Moses (as) was a reality while the sorcerers' deeds were some deceits, trickeries, dissimulations, juggleries and delusions.

This was the first stroke which was struck upon the foundation of the power of Pharaoh, the arrogant.

In verse 119, the Qur'ān implies that, thereafter, the signs of failure were seen in them, and all of them became low and helpless.

The verse says:

"Thus were they there defeated and brought low."

The more important stroke happened when the scene of struggle of sorcerers against Moses (as) was totally changed, and suddenly all the sorcerers fell down prostrating for the greatness of Allah. The verse says:

"And the sorcerers fell down in prostration."

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 121-122

قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ

121. ***"They said: 'We have believed in the Lord of the worlds."***

122. ***"The Lord of Moses and Aaron'."***

The sorcerers shouted that they believed in the Lord of the worlds, Who was the Lord of Moses and Aaron. The verses say:

"They said: 'We have believed in the Lord of the worlds."
"The Lord of Moses and Aaron'."

This happening was something which could never be foresighted by Pharaoh and his men.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 123

قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ءَامَنْتُمْ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ إِنَّ هذَا لَمَكْرٌ مَكَرْتُمُوهُ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ لِتُخْرِجُوا مِنْهَآ أَهْلَهَا فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

123. ***"Pharaoh said: 'Did you believe in him before I should give you permission? Surely this is a plot you have plotted in the city that you may expel its people from it, but soon you shall know*** (***the consequences***)***!"***

When a new stroke was struck upon the bases and pillars of the power and authority of Pharaoh because of the victory of Moses (as) over the sorcerers and that they believed in Moses (as), Pharaoh was frightened and got excited. That was why he applied two plots as follows:

The first was his accusation against the sorcerers which perhaps was admired by common people. The verse says:

"Pharaoh said: 'Did you believe in him before I should give you permission?..."

This is the worst form of colonialism that a nation be taken as slaves and captives so that they may not have even the right of thinking, contemplating, and heartily believing in a person or a religion.

This is the very plan which, in the present age, is pursued under the title of 'New colonialism', too.

Then, Pharaoh added:

"...Surely this is a plot you have plotted in the city that you may expel its people from it..."

This accusation was so unfounded and infamous that none could accept, except some perfectly unaware persons among common people.

After that, Pharaoh threatened them ambiguously, but it was said intensively and firmly. He said:

"...but soon you shall know (***the consequences***)***!"***

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 124-125

لأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِنْ خِلاَفٍ ثُمَّ لأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

قَالُوا إِنَّآ إِلَى رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ

124. ***"Surely I will cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, then I will certainly crucify***

you all'."

125. ***"They said: 'Verily unto our Lord we return'."***

The ambiguous threat of Pharaoh, which was referred to in the previous verse, is clearly stated in the verse under discussion. Here, Pharaoh takes an oath that he cuts off their hands and feet on opposite sides, i.e. the right hand and the left foot, or the left hand and the right foot. The verse says:

"Surely I will cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, then I will certainly crucify you all'."

What Pharaoh undertook here against the sorcerers, who had believed in Moses (as), was a general behaviour that usually the tyrannical rulers have in their cowardly oppositions against the adherents of the Truth.

On one side, they use the weapon of accusation against the demandant of the Truth to weaken them and their position both in the view of common people. And, on the other side, they rely on force, power, and threat to slaughter and destruction in order to break down their authority and will.

None of the two weapons of Pharaoh could defeat the decision of the sorcerers. In their answer, they heartily and decidedly refused him, as follows:

"They said: 'Verily unto our Lord we return'."

They said this statement with the meaning that if the Pharaoh's threat could be done, they finally would become martyrs. In that case, not only the event might not harm them or decrease anything from them, but also it could be considered as an honour and a happiness for them.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 126

وَمَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّآ إِلاَّ أَنْ ءَامَنَّا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَآءَتْنَا رَبَّنَآ أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْراً وَتَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ

126. ***"And you do not take revenge upon us except because we have believed in the signs of our Lord when they came to us.' 'Our Lord! Pour out upon us patience, and cause us to die in submission'."***

Then, in order to respond the accusation of Pharaoh, and to make the truth clear for the audience of the concerning scene, and, also, to prove their own sinlessness, the sorcerers said:

"And you do not take revenge upon us except because we have believed in the signs of our Lord when they came to us.'..."

At that time, they turned their faces from Pharaoh and, being attentive to Allah, they invoked Him to bestow upon them the highest degree of patience and perseverance. They knew that they could not tolerate those terrible threats without His help and His support. So, they said:

"…'Our Lord! Pour out upon us patience, and cause us to die in submission'."

As it has been recorded in the Islamic traditions, as well as the history, finally the sorcerers resisted on their idea so much so that Pharaoh fulfilled what he had threatened, and he hung their mutilated bodies on some tall palm trees by the bank of Nile River.

Yes, if belief and full awareness combine with together, the income of such a spiritual love will be some perseverance and devotion which will not be surprising in that way.

Section 15: Persecution of the Israelites

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 127

وَقَالَ الْمَلأُ مِنْ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ أَتَذَرُ مُوسَى وَقَوْمَهُ لِيُفْسِدُوا فِي الاَرْضِ وَيَذَرَكَ وءَالِهَتَكَ قَالَ سَنُقَتِّلُ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ وَنَسْتَحْيِي نِسَآءَهُمْ وإِنَّا فَوْقَهُمْ قَاهِرُونَ

127. ***"And the chiefs of Pharaoh's people said: 'Will you leave Moses and his people to make mischief in the land, and to desert you and your gods?' He said: 'Soon we will kill their sons and spare their women, and surely we are in power over them'."***

After seeing the belief of the sorcerers, in order to move Pharaoh, the chiefs of his people told him whether he left Moses and his followers alive to oppose him and make other people oppose and, consequently, to take the control of government from Pharaoh and to make mischief in the country. They would also leave out both him and his gods. The verse says:

"And the chiefs of Pharaoh's people said: 'Will you leave Moses and his people to make mischief in the land, and to desert you and your gods?'…"

Pharaoh answered them that he would kill their sons who were the encouragement of those people and whom they were making ready for fighting, while he would leave their daughters alive because they could do nothing against him. Pharaoh said that he could make of their females servants so that they became lowing and miserable. The holy verse continues saying:

"…He said: 'Soon we will kill their sons and spare their women…"

It is understood from this sentence that Pharaoh did not expect to kill Moses (as) and his followers since he had recognized their power unfailing. Therefore, he decided to attack the defendless children and to destroy them. The verse ends thus:

"...and surely we are in power over them'."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 128

قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ اسْتَعِينُوا بِاللّهِ وَاصْبِرُوا إِنَّ الأَرْضَ لِلّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَنْ يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

128*. "Moses said to his people: 'Seek help from Allah and endure. Verily the earthbelongs to Allah; He grants its inheritance to whomever He pleases of His servants, and the end is* (*best*) *for the pious ones."*

There are two commandments accompanied with two glad tidings referred to in this holy verse. The commandments are:

'seeking help from Allah' and ***'endurance'***; and the glad tidings are ***'the inheritance of the earth' and 'the good end of the pious'.***

It also indicates that seeking help from Allah and having confidence in Allah together with perseverance and piety are among the factors of the final victory and protection against threats. This means that we must both seek help from Allah and endure ourselves. The verse says:

"Moses said to his people: 'Seek help from Allah and endure..."

Another matter is that, at the sensitive times, a leader must console the community and make them hopeful, because the hope to a clear future is the promise of all religions including Islam. Moreover, the pious people, not only have a good end

in this world, but also are victorious in the next world.

"...Verily the earth belongs to Allah; He grants its inheritance to whomever He pleases of His servants, and the end is (***best***) ***for the pious ones."***

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 129

قَالُوا أُوذِينَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا قَالَ عَسَى رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ عَدُوَّكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفَكُمْ فِي الأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ

129. ***“They said: ‘We have been hurt before you came to us and (also) after you came to us.’ He said: ‘Maybe that your Lord will destroy your enemy and will make you successors in the earth, then He observes how you act.”***

The Children of Israel expected all the affairs be promptly corrected in one night after the raise of Moses (as), and the country of Egypt, with all its facilities, could be in their authority, and the Pharaonic people would be annihilated. That was why they claimed that the raise of Moses (as) did not bring confort for them.
The reply of Allah (s.w.t.) is that triumph needs some conditions, such as patience, struggle, and reliance. When these conditions are supplied, there is a hope to the help of Allah.

It was thus that the divine leaders were sometimes criticized by some friends who were of little capacity and of little tolerance. The verse says:

“They said: ‘We have been hurt before you came to us and (also) after you came to us.’…”

Most of people imagine that happiness and felicity is found in comfort and tranquility. They suppose that the lack of them is as a failure to obtain their desires. They are neglectful that the Divine religions have come to correct the ways of lives, not to efface their difficulties.

A leader should hearken to critics and send some hope-giving messages. The verse continues saying:

“…He said: ‘Maybe that your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you successors in the earth…”

An Islamic government is a means of trial not a means of seeking pleasure. Then, the verse concludes as follows:

“…then He observes how you act.”

Section 16: The Delivery of the Israelites

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 130

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَآ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِالسِّنِينَ وَنَقْصٍ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ

130. ***“And certainly We afflicted the clan of Pharaoh with drought and scarcity of fruits, so that they may take admonition.”***

The Arabic word /sinin/ is the plural form of /sanah/ which means ‘year’; but when it is used with the term /’ax□/ in the Arabic contexts, it often means: ‘to afflict with drought and famine’. The Qur’□n implies that Allah afflicted Pharaoh and his clan with drought and famine because of the indecent manner that they committed. The verse says:

“And certainly We afflicted the clan of Pharaoh with drought…”

It also implies that besides famine and drought, Allah afflicted them with scarcity of fruits in order that they be in awe and to become monotheists, but they did not change their way. The verse continues saying:

“…and scarcity of fruits, so that they may take admonition.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 131

فإِذَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْحَسَنَةُ قَالُوا لَنَا هَذِهِ وإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَطَّيَّرُوا بِمُوسَى وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَلاَ إِنَّمَا طَآئِرُهُمْ عِنْدَ اللّهِ وَلكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لاَيَعْلَمُونَ

131*. “So, when any good came to them, they said: ‘This is our due’; and if any evil afflicted them, they took it bad omens due to Moses and those with him. Be it known! Surely the cause of their bad omens is with Allah,but most of them do not know.”*

Whenever they obtained abundance of good, they said that it was for their own due that there had continuously been bounties in their cities, and, therefore, they did not thank Allah. The verse says:

“So, when any good came to them, they said: ‘This is our due’…”

But when they afflicted famine and starvation, they took Moses and his followers bad omens and said that it was due to them. In this regard, the verse says:

“…and if any evil afflicted them, they took it bad omens due to Moses and those with him…”

Their real misfortune was as a result of their own sins and evil deeds. Such things cause the punishment of Allah for them both in this world and the Hereafter. The verse says:

“…Be it known! Surely the cause of their bad omens is with Allah…”

But most of them do not know it, and do not contemplate to know this fact. The verse ends as follows:

“…but most of them do not know.”

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 132

وَقَالُوا مَهْمَا تَأْتِنَا بِهِ مِنْ ءَايَةٍ لِتَسْحَرَنَا بِهَا فَمَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

132. ***"And they said: 'Whatever sign you may bring to us to charm us with it, we will not believe in you'."***

The enemies knew that the job of Moses was not magic and also knew that it was a Divine Sign, but they arrogantly and obstinately did not believe.

But, when the sorcerers, who were expert in their job, understood that the accomplishment of Moses (as) was not a magic, they believed.

Perhaps, the manner of the people of Pharaoh, that they called the accomplishment of Moses 'a sign', had been done mockingly.

The verse says:

"And they said: 'Whatever sign you may bring to us to charm us with it, we will not believe in you'."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 133

فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوفَانَ وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ وَالدَّمَ ءَايَاتٍ مُفَصَّلاَتٍ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْماً مُجْرِمِينَ

133. ***"So We sent against them the flood and the locusts and the vermin and the frogs and the blood as distinct signs, yet they acted proudly and they were a guilty people."***

The Arabic term /t�f�n/ in the Persian language means: 'hurricane', but in the Arabic language it has been used with the sense of: 'a violate flood'. In Mufrad�t-i-R�qib, it is cited that the word /t�f�n/ is applied for any common event which is horrible.

The Arabic word /qummal/ means: some small insects, such as: lice, ants, aphis, and a kind of insects.

'Blood', which was among the divine signs and a punishment for the opponents of the people of Moses (as), means: the change of water(s) into blood, or a common bleeding of people.

The attack of locusts, flood, and 'water being altered into blood' were ordained only against the people of Pharaoh, while the Children of Israel were in security.

The explanation of these punishments have been mentioned in the Turah, too. Some evidences are as

follows:

1- The river turned into blood.... Exodus, Chapter 7, verse 20

2- Swarm of flies.... Exodus, Chapter 8, verse 21 and verse 24

3- The plague of hail.... Exodus, Chapter 9, verse 24 and verse 25

4- The attack of locusts.... Exodus, Chapter 10, verses 12 and 14

After Allah's warning and people's heedlessness, it is the turn of some grievous retributions to come forth.

The verse says:

"So We sent against them the flood and the locusts and the vermin and the frogs and the blood as distinct signs..."

Living creatures are the agents of Allah. Their mission is sometimes to bring mercy, like the spider's web at the doorway of the cave for the protection of the Messenger of Allah (S). And, it is sometimes a chastisement mission, like that of the swallows, and, in this verse, the mission of frogs and locusts.

However, many calamities are often for training. In any retribution, there is a respite for people to contemplate and repent and return to the Straight Path. Therefore, the Divine retributions come after completing the argument.

They saw the divine sign and punishment, yet they acted arrogantly. The verse says:

"...yet they acted proudly and they were a guilty people."

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 134-135

وَلَمَّا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّجْزُ قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِنْدَكَ لَئِنْ كَشَفْتَ عَنَّا الْرِّجْزَ لَنُؤْمِنَنَّ لَكَ وَلَنُرْسِلَنَّ مَعَكَ بَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ

فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمُ الْرِّجْزَ إِلَى أَجَلٍ هُمْ بَالِغُوهُ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُثُونَ

134. ***"And when the plague fell upon them, they said: 'O' Moses! invoke your Lord for us by the covenant He has made with you. If you remove the plague from us, we will certainly believe in you, and we will certainly send with you the Children of Israel'."***

135. ***"But when We removed the plague from them until a term which they should reach, behold,***

***they broke** (**their promise again**).”*

The Arabic term /nakḍ/ originally means: ‘to untwist a rope’, but later it has been used in the sense of ‘breaking a covenant’, or ‘violating an oath’. The verse says:

“And when the plague fell upon them, they said: ‘O’ Moses! invoke your Lord for us by the covenant He has made with you. If you remove the plague from us, we will certainly believe in you, and we will certainly send with you the Children of Israel’.”

The Qur’ānic term /’ajal/, in this verse, may be the time which Moses (as) appointed for the removal of a calamity, saying that, for example, it would be removed on so and so day or at so and so hour, in order that they might understand that it was a divine retribution and not an accidental happening.

The purpose also maybe that those obstinate people would finally meet the unavoidable Wrath of Allah, but until the appearance of that time and being drowned in the sea, the punishment was temporarily removed.

The verse says:

***“But when We removed the plague from them until a term which they should reach, behold, they broke** (**their promise again**).”*

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 136

فَانْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ

136. ***“So We took vengeance on them and drowned them in the sea, because they belied Our Signs and were heedless of them.”***

The Arabic term /’intiqām/ with the meaning of ‘vengeance’, in this verse, means ‘punishment’, and it does not mean ‘grudge’ or ‘rancour’ here.

The word /yam/ in the old Egyptian language was used for a sea or a river. Since the story here refers to Egypt, the same old word has been used in this verse of the Qur’ān.[1]

However, it should be noted that Allah is also ‘taker of vengeance’. The verse says:

“So We took vengeance on them and drowned them in the sea, because they belied Our Signs...”

Another point is that the main source of misfortunes and calamities is inside the entities of ourselves, and negligence brings a heavy compensation for us. The holy verse continues saying:

“...and were heedless of them.”

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 137

وَأَوْرَثْنَا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُسْتَضْعَفُونَ مَشَارِقَ الأرْضِ وَمَغَارِبَهَا الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَى عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَدَمَّرْنَا مَاكَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَقَوْمُهُ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْرِشُونَ

137. ***"And We made the people, who were abased, the inheritors to the east (parts) of the land and the west (parts) of it which We had blessed therein, and the good word of your Lord about the Children of Israel was fulfilled for what they endured patiently, and We destroyed what Pharaoh and his people had built and what they used to erect."***

The region that the Children of Israel inherited included of Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and present Palestine. Those lands contained both material bounties and spiritual bounties, where the great prophets raised and were buried.

The lands which were under the control of Pharaoh and his people were so vast that there were different horizons and with different hours of risings and settings of the sun therein.

From the points of industry, agriculture, and interesting buildings of their time, the people of Pharaoh were very developed. The verse says:

"And We made the people, who were abased, the inheritors to the east (parts) of the land and the west (parts) of it which We had blessed therein, and the good word of your Lord about the Children of Israel was fulfilled for what they endured patiently, and We destroyed what Pharaoh and his people had built and what they used to erect."

Yet, since the governments of divine prophets have been the governments of the oppressed, and Allah fulfills His promises, those oppressed people who show patience and perseverance can become the inheritors of the earth, as the verse indicates:

"…We made the people, who were abased, the inheritors to the east (parts) of the land and the west (parts) of it…"

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 138

وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتَوْا عَلَى قَوْمٍ يَعْكُفُونَ عَلَى أَصْنَامٍ لَهُمْ قَالُوا يَامُوسَى اجْعَلْ لَنَآ إِلَهاً كَمَا لَهُمْ ءَالِهَةٌ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ

138. ***"And We made the Children of Israel to pass the sea; then they came upon a people cleaving to idols they had. They said: 'O' Moses! make for us a god, as they have gods'. He (Moses) said:***

'Verily you are a people behaving ignorantly'."

Those expert sorcerers of Pharaoh, who were dealing with sorcery and magic during all their lives, became such good believers by seeing a miracle that Pharaoh's terrible threats could not change their decision.

But, some of the followers of Moses, who saw all those great miracles, were so weak that they even asked him (as) for an idol, and the observation of a deviated scene of idolatry drew them toward perversity.

The verse says:

"And We made the Children of Israel to pass the sea; then they came upon a people cleaving to idols they had. They said: 'O' Moses! make for us a god, as they have gods'. He (Moses) said: 'Verily you are a people behaving ignorantly'."

Therefore, as long as a group of people have not become strong enough in their true belief and faith, they should not migrate unto some perverted and dangerous regions, because invironments may affect on them, and communities are always exposed to the danger of aberration.

Also, sometimes it happens that watching an unappropriate view (of a film, a picture, or a society) spoils all the training efforts of the leaders.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 139

إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مُتَبَّرٌ مَاهُمْ فِيهِ وَبَاطِلٌ مَاكَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

139. ***"(Moses said:) Surely this they are engaged upon shall be perished, and what they are doing are in vain."***

The Qur'ānic term /mutabbarun/ is derived from the word /tabār/ with the meaning of 'destruction'.

The holy verse maybe points to the glad tidings of Moses (as) to the people, saying that by their presence in that region, polytheism and perversion would be effaced. (narrated from Marāqi, commentary). Here is the verse:

"(Moses said:) Surely this they are engaged upon shall be perished, and what they are doing are in vain."

Therefore, both the mental and practical perversions are perishable. The end of them all is destruction.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 140-141

قَالَ أَغَيْرَ اللّهِ أَبْغِيكُمْ إِلَهاً وَهُوَ فَضَّلَكُمْ عَلى الْعَالَمِينَ

وإِذْ أَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يُقَتِّلُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ وَفِي ذلِكُمْ بَلاَءٌ مِن رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ

140. ***"He said: 'Shall I find for you a god other than Allah, while He has preferred you above all creatures?'"***

141. ***"And*** (***remember***) ***when We delivered you from Pharaoh's clan who were afflicting you with evil torment, slaughtering your sons and sparing your women, and in that was a great trial from your Lord."***

Then, for an emphasis, the Qur'ān adds that Moses said to them whether he should find a god other than Allah for them; the same Lord Who preferred them over all people of their time. Here is the statement of the verse:

"He said: 'Shall I find for you a god other than Allah, while He has preferred you above all creatures?'"

In the next verse, Allah points to one of His great bounties bestowed upon the Children of Israel, so that by attending to that great bounty the sense of gratitude could be moved in them, and they knew that only His Pure Essence is eligible to be adored, worshipped and submitted.

At first it says:

"And (***remember***) ***when We delivered you from Pharaoh's clan who were afflicting you with evil torment..."***

Then, this ceaseless torment is explained as follows:

"...slaughtering your sons and sparing your women..."

The explanation of the verse implies that in that event there lies a great trial upon them from the side of Allah. The verse says:

"...and in that was a great trial from your Lord."

1. Narrated from Mu'jam-ul-Kabir.

Section 17: The Physical Eyes Can Never See Allah

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 142

وَوَاعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلاَثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَأَتْمَمْنَاهَا بِعَشْرٍ فَتَمَّ مِيقَاتُ رَبِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً وَقَالَ مُوسَى لأَخِيهِ هَارُونَ اخْلُفْنِي فِي قَوْمِي وَأَصْلِحْ وَلاتَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

142. ***“And We made an appointment with Moses for thirty nights, and completed them with ten (more),so the appointed time of his Lord was completed forty nights. And (before going there) Moses said to his brother Aaron: ‘Be my successor among people, and set the (people’s) affairs right and do not follow the way of mischief-makers’.”***

In Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 50, the statement denotes that Allah (s.w.t.) appointed forty nights for Moses (as): ***“And (remember) when We appointed forty nights for Moses…”,*** but here, in this verse, the appointment is thirty nights added with ten more nights.

As Imam Bāqir (as) said:

“The philosophy of that manner was to try the Children of Israel”. [1]

The length of this time has been forty nights and days, yet the reason that the verse says ‘forty nights’, maybe, is that supplications are often performed at night. Or, perhaps, its reason is that in old times the formation of calendar was based on the appearance of the moon at night. The number of nights has also been used in counting days. The verse says:

“And We made an appointment with Moses for thirty nights, and completed them with ten (more), so the appointed time of his Lord was completed forty nights…”

There are some secrets hidden in this figure, i.e. ‘forty’. This figure has a special position in the cultures of different religions. The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (S), was appointed to prophethood when he was forty years old. He kept aloof from Khadijah for forty nights in order that the heavenly food to be sent down and the preparation of the birth of Hazrat Zahrā (as) to be supplied.

The descent of Divine revelation unto the Holy Prophet (S) was ceased for forty days.

The people of Moses (as) were wandering bewildered in the deserts for forty years.

At the time of Noah, it rained for forty days.

To learn forty Islamic traditions by heart causes this person to be raised among the experts of Muslim law in Hereafter.

The preparation of spiritual perfection of man develops until the person becomes forty years old. After that the affairs are more difficult and the accounts are more delicate.

The recitation of Surah Al-Hamd done for forty times unto a sick person can be effective in his healing.

Whoever drinks wine, his prayers will not be accepted for forty days, though the one must establish those prayers.

Allah may forgive a person upon whose dead body forty believers testify that he has been a good person.[2]

However, the explanation of forty nights of the appointed tryst of Moses is referred to in the Turah, Exedus.

Some Islamic literature denotes that thirty nights out of this forty nights were the whole nights of Zilqa'dah, and the added ten nights happened at the beginning nights of Zil-Hajjah.[3]

In any case, the event of the tryst of Moses (as) was as follows:

"...And (before going there) Moses said to his brother Aaron: 'Be my successor among people, and set the (people's) affairs right and do not follow the way of mischief-makers'."

The Tradition of Rank

A large number of commentators from both great Islamic sects have referred to the known 'Tradition of Rank' when explaining the verse under discussion. There is a difference, of course, that Shi'ite commentators have taken it as one of the reputable proofs for the immediate vicegerency of Ali (as).

The text of the tradition denotes that many of the companions of the Prophet (S) have detailed the process of the Battle of Tabūk as follows:

The Prophet (S) set out towards Tabūk when he appointed Ali-ibn-Abitālib (as) in his place. Ali (as) said to the Porphet (S) whether he left him among children and women (and did not let him go with him (S) to the battle-field to struggle).

The Messenger of Allah (S) answered him whether he was not content to be in the same rank to him (S) as Aaron was to Moses except that there would be no prophet after him.

It was not only in the Battle of Tabūk that the Prophet (S) expressed this meaning, but also in several occasions, other than that, this statement was heard from him, (S) including the followings:

1- One day, the Prophet (S) told 'Umm-us-Salamah:

"O' 'Umm-us-Salamah! Ali's tissue is the same as my tissue and, his blood is the same as my blood. The example of him unto me is like the example of Aaron unto Moses."

2- Ibn-'Abbas says that one day 'Umar-ibn-Khattāb said that once he was in the presence of the Prophet (S) accompanied with Abū-Bakr and some of the companions of the Prophet (S). The Prophet (S) was leaning on Ali (as) when he touched Ali's shoulder and said:

"O" Ali! you are the first man who believed (in Allah) and you are the first person who accepted Islam."

Then he (S) said:

"The example of you unto me is like the example of Aaron unto Moses ".

However, if we impartially examine the above-mentioned tradition, it can be understood from it that Ali (as) had been given all the positions that Aaron had unto Moses (as) and among the Children of Israel, except prophethood.

This meaning mentioned about the Tradition of Rank has been cited in the Sunnite sources such as: Sahih-i-Bukhāri, vol. 6, p. 3; Sahih-i-Muslim, vol. 4, p. 187; Sunan-i-Ibn-i-Mājid, vol. 1, p. 42; Musnad-i-Ahmad-ibn-Hanbal, vol. 1, pp. 173, 175, 177, 179, 182.

But the very tradition, 'the Tradition of Rank', is widely transmitted with Shi'ites and it is available in the authentic books of traditions, including:

1) 'Abaqāt, in book of Muhammad and Ali'.
2) The tradition of Thaqalayn, by Najmiddin 'Askary, pp. 105-127;
3) Safinat-ul-Bihār, vol. 21, p. 209;
4) Bihār-ul-'Anwār, vol. 37, p. 254;
5) Kanz-ul-Kirāchi, pp. 282,283;
6) An-Nihāyah, vol. 2, p. 172;
7) Kashf-ul-Qummah, p. 44;
8) Manāqib, Ibn-Abi-Tālib;
9) Al-Yaghin;
10) Al-Kharā'ij-wal-Jarāyih;
11) Kāmil-ut-Tawārikh, by Ibn-'Athir;
12) At-Tarā'if.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 143

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ مُوسَى لِمِيقَاتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهُ رَبُّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ لَنْ تَرَانِي وَلَكِنِ انْظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ فإِنِ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُ

فَسَوْفَ تَرَانِي فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّى رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكّاً وَخَرَّ مُوسَى صَعِقاً فَلَمَّآ اَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَاَنَاْ اَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

143. ***"And when Moses came to Our appointed tryst and his Lord spoke with him, he said: 'My Lord, show me (Yourself), that I may look towards You!' He (Allah) said: 'Never shall you see Me, but look towards the mountain: if it remains firm in its place, then you will see Me.' So when his Lord manifested (His) glory to the mountain, He sent it crashing down, and Moses fell down senseless. Then when he recovered, he said: 'Glory be to You! I turn to You (repentant), and I am the first of the believers'."***

The Qur'□nic word /dakkah/ means 'a level land', and, therefore, in this verse the text means that the mountain was turned into dust so that it became level as the land.

That Divine Power, whatever it was, pounded the mountain into dust. Was it the great atomic power, or the power of waves, or some other mystic power? It is unknown.

There were two times that observing Allah was asked for. One time Moses (as) himself asked Allah to see His True Essense. Then, in answer to him (as), this very current verse was revealed and manifested that Moses (as) had not its capacity. The verse says:

"And when Moses came to Our appointed tryst and his Lord spoke with him, he said: 'My Lord, show me (Yourself), that I may look towards You!' He (Allah) said: 'Never shall you see Me, but look towards the mountain: if it remains firm in its place, then you will see Me.' So when his Lord manifested (His) glory to the mountain, He sent it crashing down, and Moses fell down senseless. Then when he recovered, he said: 'Glory be to You! I turn to You (repentant), and I am the first of the believers'."

Another time was when the Children of Israel were seeking the pretext, and ignorantly asked Moses to see Allah by the eyes of head. This meaning has been referred to in verse No. 155 of the current Surah, which will be explained later.

This fact should be noted that Allah can never be seen by the outword eyes, neither in this world nor in the Hereafter. As the verse says:

"...'Never shall you see Me,'..."

But He must be known by means of His effects, where His manifestations can be looked at. The verse says:

"...so when his Lord manifested (His) glory to the mountain, He sent it crashing down..."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 144

قَالَ يَا مُوسَى إِنِّي اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسَالاَتِي وَبِكَلاَمِي فَخُذْ مَآءَاتَيْتُكَ وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ

144. ***"He said: 'O' Moses! verily I have chosen you above the people by My Messages and by My speaking (unto you). So take what I have given you, and be of the grateful ones'."***

Moses is Allah's chosen servant. So, different demands, to become senseless, repentence and the like of them do not hinder him to be chosen. The verse says:

"He said: 'O' Moses! verily I have chosen you above the people by My Messages and by My speaking (unto you)..."

Imam S⊡diq (as) says:

"Allah told Moses (as): 'Do you know why did I choose you? It was because your humbleness and submission was matchless. Whenever you established prayer, you put your cheeks on the soil'."[4]

After the removal of T⊡q⊡t (deity) and formation of a godly society, the turn is for the execution of law and divine ordinances. Allah commands Moses:

"...So take what I have given you..."

The bounties of Allah must be thanked for. The godly leading and religious responsibilities are amongst the bounties of Allah, for which we must thank. The verse says:

"...and be of the grateful ones'."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 145

وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِي الاَلْوَاحِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلاً لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ يَأْخُذُوا بِاَحْسَنِهَا سَأُوْرِيكُمْ دَارَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

145. ***"And We wrote for him in the Tablets of everything an admonition, and the explanation of all things; so, (O' Moses!) take hold of them with firmness and bid your people to take hold of the best of them. Soon I will show you the abode of the transgressors."***

The verse indicates that, in the Tablets, Allah explained of everything some advices and admonitions sufficiently for Moses (as), and He detailed the necessary affairs of the life and religion needed for individuals and the society of his time. The verse says:

"And We wrote for him in the Tablets of everything an admonition, and the explanation of all things..."

Then, He commanded Moses to take those commandments with utmost effort and with a strong and earnest will. The verse says:

"...so, (O' Moses!) take hold of them with firmness..."

Moses (as) was also ordered to bid his people to act according to the best of them. The verse continues saying:

"...and bid your people to take hold of the best of them..."

Alongside this subject, Moses (as) was commanded to warn his people that opposing those commandments, and escaping from responsibilities and fulfilling the duties, would bring a dreadful result and, finally, Hell for them. Therefore, at the end of the verse, Allah says:

"...Soon I will show you the abode of the transgressors."

It is understood from the holy phrase: ***"...of every thing an admonition..."*** that there were not mentioned all the admonitions, advices, and necessary subjects in the Tablets of Moses. At that time, the divine ordinances were revealed according to the capacity and talents of those people.

But, when the people of the world reached the last stage of the prophets' training, the last command, which enveloped the whole material and spiritual necessities of human beings, was revealed unto the Prophet of Islam (S).

The apparent meaning of the phrase: ***"...Soon I will show you the abode of the transgressors."*** is that the abode of those who have gone out from the obedience of Allah in doing their duties is Hell.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 146

سَاَصْرِفُ عَنْ ءَايَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الاَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقّ وإِن يَرَوْا كُلَّ ءَايَةٍ لاَيُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا وَإِن يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الرُّشْدِ لاَ
يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلاً وإِن يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الْغَيّ يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلاً ذَلِك بِاَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِاَيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ

146. ***"Soon I will (allow to) turn away from My signs those who are arrogant in the earth unjustly; while (even) if they see any sign, they will not believe in it, and if they see the way of rectitude they do not take it for a way, and if they see the way of perverseness they take it for a way. This is because they belied Our signs and were heedless of them."***

The statements, which have formed this verse and the verse after it, are indeed a conclusion drawn from the previous verses upon the fate of Pharaoh and his people, and also the arrogant persons of the

Children of Israel. At first, the verse says:

“Soon I will* (*allow to*) *turn away from My signs those who are arrogant in the earth unjustly…”

Then the Qur’ān points to three parts of the qualities of these proud and arrogant people and that how they were dispossessed of the success of the truth. It says:

“…while* (*even*) *if they see any sign, they will not believe in it…”

And, also, if they see the straight path and the right way, they do not choose it as their own way. The verse says:

“…and if they see the way of rectitude they do not take it for a way…”

After mentioning these three qualities, all of which denote to their arrogance against the truth, the Qur’ān points to the reason of them and says:

“…This is because they belied Our signs and were heedless of them.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 147

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَلِقَآءِ الآخِرَةِ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ إلاَّ مَاكَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

147. ***“And those who belie Our signs and the meeting of the Hereafter, their* (*good*) *deeds are null. Shall they be recompensed except for what they used to do?”***

This verse refers to the punishment of such arrogant people. It says:

“And those who belie Our signs and the meeting of the Hereafter, their* (*good*) *deeds are null…”

And at the end of the verse, the Qur’ān implies that this fate is not as a vengeance for them. It is the fruit of their own deeds, or it is the embodiment of their exact deeds that has been encarnated before them. Thus, the verse says:

“…Shall they be recompensed except for what they used to do?”

This holy verse is one of the verses which are taken as the evidence for proving the embodiment of actions, and the presence of the deeds themselves, good and evil, in the Hereafter.

1. Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, the commentary, vol. 2, p. 61.
2. Safinat-ul-Bihār, vol. 1, p. 505
3. Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, the commentary
4. Tafsir-us-Sāfi, and’Usūl-i-Kāfi

Section 18: The Israelites Started Calf Worshipping

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 148

وَاتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَىٰ مِن بَعْدِهِ مِنْ حُلِيِّهِمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهُ خُوَارٌ ۚ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمْ وَلَا يَهْدِيهِمْ سَبِيلًا ۘ اتَّخَذُوهُ وَكَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ

148. ***"And the people of Moses made of their ornaments a calf after him, a** (**mere**) **body that lowed. Did they not see that it did not speak to them, nor did it guide them to any way? They took it** (**for worship**) **and they were unjust."***

Through these verses one of the lamentable and surprising events has been referred to. It happened among the Children of Israel after going Moses (as) to the tryst. That event was their worshipping Calf, which was arranged by a person called 'Sāmiri' and by means of some golden ornaments offered by the Children of Israel.

The verse implies that after going Moses to the tryst, his people made a calf out of their ornaments which was only a lifeless body with the mooing sound of a cow which they worshipped. At first, it says:

"And the people of Moses made of their ornaments a calf after him, a** (**mere**) **body that lowed..."

Then the Qur'ān, scorning them, says:

"...Did they not see that it did not speak to them, nor did it guide them to any way?..."

The objective meaning of this question is that a true deity should recognize the right and wrong and be able to guide his followers. He should save the ability of speaking with his worshippers and guide them to the straight way, and teach them the way of worship.

In fact, they were unjust to their own selves. That is why the verse says:

"...They took it** (**for worship**) **and they were unjust."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 149

وَلَمَّا سُقِطَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَأَوْا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا قَالُوا لَئِن لَّمْ يَرْحَمْنَا رَبُّنَا وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

149. “And when they smote their hands and saw that they had gone astray, they said: ‘Should our Lord have not mercy on us and forgive us (not), we shall certainly be of the losers’,”

When Moses (as) came back from the mountain, the Children of Israel realized that they had made mistake and were of the losers. The verse says:

“And when they smote their hands and saw that they had gone astray, they said: ‘Should our Lord have not mercy on us and forgive us (not), we shall certainly be of the losers’,”

Some of the commentators believe that Sāmeri, with the information he had, had set some special pipes in the breast of a golden calf through which some pressed air could pass out and a sound, similar to the sound of a cow, was heard from the mouth of that calf.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 150

وَلَمَّا رَجَعَ مُوسَىٰ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ غَضْبَانَ أَسِفًا قَالَ بِئْسَمَا خَلَفْتُمُونِي مِن بَعْدِي ۖ أَعَجِلْتُمْ أَمْرَ رَبِّكُمْ ۖ وَأَلْقَى الْأَلْوَاحَ وَأَخَذَ بِرَأْسِ أَخِيهِ يَجُرُّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ قَالَ ابْنَ أُمَّ إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اسْتَضْعَفُونِي وَكَادُوا يَقْتُلُونَنِي فَلَا تُشْمِتْ بِيَ الْأَعْدَاءَ وَلَا تَجْعَلْنِي مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

150. ***“And when Moses returned (from the Mountain) unto his people, wrathful (and) grieved, he said: ‘Evil it is that you have done in my place after me. Did you hasten on the bidding of your Lord?’ And, he dropped the Tablets and seized his brother by the head, dragging him toward himself. He (Aaron) said: ‘O son of my mother! verily the people judged me weak and had well-nigh slain me. So do not let the enemies gloat over me, and do not count me among the unjust people.”***

In this verse and the verse after it, the event of the conflict of Moses (as) with calf-worshippers, when he returned from the tryst, has been explained. This event was only hinted out in the previous verse.

This is an explanation upon the hideous and hateful scene of the calf-worshipping of the people of Moses who had spoilt his religion when Moses came back from the Mountain. The verse says:

“And when Moses returned (from the Mountain) unto his people, wrathful (and) grieved, he said: ‘Evil it is that you have done in my place after me…”

Then, Moses (as) added telling them:

“…Did you hasten on the bidding of your Lord?’…”

The objective meaning of this phrase is that, due to the command of Allah concerning the length of the appointment of Moses (as) from thirty nights to forty nights, the people of Moses hastened and judged

over it hurriedly.

They took the absence of Moses (as) as a reason for his death or breach of promises. In that circumstance, Moses had to manifest an intensive wrath, otherwise their return to the truth was not easily possible.

The harsh reaction of Moses against this scene and in that moment has been stated by the Qur'ān as follows:

"...And, he dropped the Tablets and seized his brother by the head, dragging him toward himself..."

In fact, this reaction illustrated, on one side, the inward conditions of Moses (as) and his intensive annoyance for the idolatry and aberration of those people, and, on the other side, it was an effective means for moving the minds of the Children of Israel and making them attentive to the extraordinary obscenity of their deeds.

Then, the Qur'ān, referring to the manner of Aaron for exciting the sympathy of Moses (as) and stating his sinlessness, says:

"...He (Aaron) said: 'O son of my mother! verily the people judged me weak and had well-nigh slain me. So do not let the enemies gloat over me, and do not count me among the unjust people."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 151

قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلأَخِي وَأَدْخِلْنَا فِي رَحْمَتِكَ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

151. ***"He (Moses) said (praying): 'O' Lord! forgive me and my brother and admit us into Your Mercy, and You are the most merciful of the merciful ones'."***

When the fire of the wrath of Moses (as) was rather quenched, he refuged to Allah (s.w.t.) and invoked Him as follows:

"He (Moses) said (praying): 'O' Lord! forgive me and my brother and admit us into Your Mercy, and You are the most merciful of the merciful ones'."

Moses (as) asked Allah to forgive him and his brother not for the sake that they had committed any sin, but it was a kind of humility and submission unto Allah for returning to Him and in order to express his hatred upon the hideous actions of the idol-worshippers.

It is also a lesson for others to learn and contemplate where Moses and his brother (as), who had no

perversion, asked Allah for such a remission, they must certainly be aware of their own reckonings.

Section 19: Mercy Promised to Those Who Accept the Apostle (Muhammad)

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 152

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ سَيَنَالُهُمْ غَضَبٌ مِن رَبِّهِمْ وَذِلَّةٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُفْتَرِينَ

152. ***“Verily those who adopted*** **(*worshipping*)** ***the Calf soon shall reach them a wrath from their Lord and abasement in the life of the world. And thus do We recompense the forgers of lies.”***

Finally, that intensive harsh reaction of Moses (as) brought forth its own effect and the calf-worshippers from the Children of Israel, who formed the majority of the people of Moses, showed regret for their treatment. But, in order that none consider that this mere regret and remorse was enough for their repentance from such a great fault, the Qur’ān adds the statement as follows:

“Verily those who adopted **(*worshipping*)** ***the Calf soon shall reach them a wrath from their Lord and abasement in the life of the world...”***

Again, in order that none imagine that this law is allocated only to those people, it is added at the end of the verse:

“...And thus do We recompense the forgers of lies.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 153

وَالَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِن بَعْدِهَا وَءَامَنُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِن بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

153. ***“And those who commit evil deeds, then repent thereafter and believe, verily, after that*** **(*repentance*)*, your Lord is certainly Forgiving, Merciful. ”***

This verse has completed the previous meaning. As a general rule, it implies that those who do some wrong actions and, under the presence of all conditions of repentance, repent thereafter and renew their belief in Allah, so that they return from any polytheism and disobedience, after that the Lord will forgive

them, for Allah (s.w.t.) is Forgiving, Merciful. The holy verse says:

"And those who commit evil deeds, then repent thereafter and believe, verily, after that (repentance), your Lord is certainly Forgiving, Merciful. "

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 154

وَلَمَّا سَكَتَ عَن مُوسَى الْغَضَبُ أَخَذَ الأَلْوَاحَ وَفِي نُسْخَتِهَا هُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ

154. ***"And when Moses' anger calmed, he took up the Tablets, and in the inscriptions of them was guidance and mercy for those who are in awe of their Lord. "***

In this verse, the Qur'ān informs that when the fire of the anger of Moses (as) quenched and he got the result he expected, he stretched his hand and took up the Tablets from the ground. The records of those Tablets were wholly guidance and mercy. That very guidance and mercy was for those who felt responsibility and were in awe of Allah and submitted to His command.

The verse says:

"And when Moses' anger calmed, he took up the Tablets, and in the inscriptions of them was guidance and mercy for those who are in awe of their Lord. "

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 155

وَاخْتَارَ مُوسَى قَوْمَهُ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلاً لِمِيقَاتِنَا فَلَمَّآ أَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ قَالَ رَبِّ لَوْ شِئْتَ أَهْلَكْتَهُم مِن قَبْلُ وَإِيَّايَ أَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ السُّفَهَآءُ مِنَّآ إِنْ هِيَ إِلاَّ فِتْنَتُكَ تُضِلُّ بِهَا مَن تَشَآءُ وَتَهْدِي مَن تَشَآءُ أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الْغَافِرِينَ

155. ***"And Moses chose seventy men from his people for Our tryst, and when the earthquake overtook them, he said: 'O' Lord! had You pleased, You could have destroyed them and me before. Will You destroy us because of what the fools of us have done? It is naught but Your trial, wherebyYou cause to stray whomever You wish and guide whomever You wish. You are our master, so forgive us and have mercy on us, for You are the best of the forgivers."***

Once more, in this verse and the next one, the Qur'ān refers to a part of the story of Moses (as) when he, accompanying with a group of the Children of Israel, went to the tryst of Tūr.

At first, the Qur'ān says:

"And Moses chose seventy men from his people for Our tryst..."

But when those men of the Children of Israel heard the word of the Lord, they demanded Moses (as) to ask Allah to show Himself. At that time a great earthquake occurred and caused those people to pass away and Moses (as) fell down senseless. When he recovered his senses he said to the Lord that if He had wished He could have destroyed them and him before that. The verse says:

"...and when the earthquake overtook them, he said: 'O' Lord! had You pleased, You could have destroyed them and me before.

That is, Moses (as) meant how could he answer his people whose representatives became like that?

Then he said to the Lord that that undue request was the utterance of some fools of those people. Then he questioned Allah whether He destroyed them for what their fools had done. The verse says:

"...Will You destroy us because of what the fools of us have done?..."

Next to this supplication and request, he said to Him:

"...It is naught but Your trial, whereby You cause to stray whomever You wish and guide whomever You wish..."

And the statement of Moses (as) to the Lord, mentioned at the end of the verse, continued as follows:

"...You are our master, so forgive us and have mercy on us, for You are the best of the forgivers."

From the totality of the verses of the Qur'ān and the Islamic traditions, it is understood that, at last, the people who were destroyed thereby were restored to life again and returned to the Children of Israel with Moses (as). They detailed for them what they had seen and began preaching those unaware people.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 156

وَاكْتُبْ لَنَا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ إِنَّا هُدْنَآ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ عَذَابِي أُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ أَشَآءُ وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ
فَسَأَكْتُبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِآيَاتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

156. ***"And prescribe goodness for us in this world and in the Hereafter, (for) verily we have come back to You (repentantly). He (the Lord) said: 'My chastisement, I will afflict with it whom I please, but My mercy embraces all things. Soon I shall prescribe it for those who keep from evil and pay the alms and those who believe in Our signs."***

Following to the request of Moses (as) from Allah and the completion of the subject of repentance, which was referred to through the previous verse, in this verse, the continuation of supplication of Moses (as) to the Lord (s.w.t.) is announced as follows:

“And prescribe goodness for us in this world and in the Hereafter…”

Then, he states the reason of this request unto Allah and that he has asked forgiveness for the undue words that those fools had said. Here is his reason:

“…(for) verily we have come back to You (repentantly)…”

At last, Allah answered the invocation of Moses (as) and accepted his repentance, but with some conditions which are stated at the end of this very verse. The verse says:

“…He (the Lord) said: ‘My chastisement, I will afflict with it whom I please, but My mercy embraces all things…”

But, in order that some persons do not imagine that the acceptance of repentance, together with the vast mercy of Allah and its generality, is not given undue and with no condition, at the end of the verse, He adds that His mercy is prescribed for those who fulfil the following three things. The verse says:

“…Soon I shall prescribe it for those who keep from evil and pay the alms and those who believe in Our signs.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 157

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوباً عِندَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَالإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَآئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالاَغْلاَلَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

157. ***“(And also for) those who follow the Messenger, the unschooled Prophet, whose explanation they find written with them in the Turah and the Evangel. He enjoins on them what is right and forbids them what is wrong, and he makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the corrupt things; and he removes from them their burden and the bondages that were upon them. Then, those who believe in him, and honour him, and help him, and follow the light which has been sent down with him, these are they that are the prosperous ones’.”***

The Arabic word /’ummi/ is derived from /’Umm/ which means ‘mother’. It is also used for a person who has not learnt to read and write. In this regard, he is like a new born child.

Some commentators have said that the term /’ummi/ means a person who is from among the ummah and common people, not from among notables. Some other commentators of the Qur’ān consider that the word is related to the term /’umm-ul-qurā/ which is an appellation for Mecca, and it, therefore, means Meccan.

Basing on some evidences, we count the existing Turah and the Bible perverted. Yet, there are some hints and glad tidings in both of them about the Prophet of Islam (S) which indicate that the People of the Book knew the Prophet of Allah so much so that a father knows his child.

Some of these references are as follows: the Turah, Genesis, Chapter 17, verses 18,20 and 21; Genesis, Chapter 49, verse 10: the Bible, John, Chapter 14, verse 15; and Chapter 15, verse 26.

At the time of the advent of Islam, there were only 17 men and one woman in Mecca who could read and write. Thus, if the Prophet (S) had studied and learnt even one word before a person, he could not be called /'ummi/ among those people.[1]

The verse says:

"(And also for) those who follow the Messenger, the unschooled Prophet, whose explanation they find written with them in the Turah and the Evangel..."

The Qur'ānic term /'aqlāl/ (chains), used in this verse, had been applied for the false notions, superstitions, idolatry, and some troublesome customs mainly remained from the Age of Ignorance.

Therefore, false customs and habits are as chains on the thoughts of people. Thus human beings who do not believe in any prophet are always dependant and they live as captives. The verse says:

"...He enjoins on them what is right and forbids them what is wrong, and he makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the corrupt things; and he removes from them their burden and the bondages that were upon them..."

A mere belief in the Prophet (S) of Islam is not enough, helping him and supporting him is also necessary. The holy verse says:

"...Then, those who believe in him, and honour him, and help him..."

However, we must know that the Qur'ān is a light which enlightens the hearts and thoughts of its believers. The verse continues saying:

"...and follow the light which has been sent down with him..."

The help and respect to the Prophet (S), like belief in him, is not allocated to a particular time. Therefore, honouring the grave of the Prophet (S) and his effects is also the extention of that help and respect.

In any case, felicity comes into being under the shade of following the prophets. The verse concludes:

"...Then, those who believe in him, and honour him, and help him, and follow the light which has been sent down with him, these are they that are the prosperous ones'."

Some Traditions

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

*"He who enjoins right and prohibits wrong is the vicegerent of both Allah and His Messenger on the earth."*2

Imam Bāqir (as) said:

*"Verily, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong is the way of prophets and the method of good doers. It is such a great obligatory deed (wājib) by which other obligatory deeds can survive, other creeds can be saved, bargains are lawful, injustices are warded off, and prosperity can be filled in the earth…"*3

Imam Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

*"The firmness of the religion is due to enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and observing the limits of Allah."*4

Imam Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said to Imam al-Hassan and Imam al-Husayn (as) when Ibn-Muljam (the curse of Allah be upon him) struck him (fatally with a sword):

"…Fear Allah (and again) fear Allah in the matter of Jihād, (struggle for the Holy War), with the help of your property, lives and speech in the way of Allah…"

*"Do not give up bidding for good and forbidding from evil lest the mischievous gain positions over you, and then (in that case) when you pray, your invocations will not be granted to you…"*5

1. Narrated from Futūh-ul-Baladān Bilāthari, p. 459.
2. Mustadrak-ul-Wasā'il, vol. 12, p. 179
3. Al-Kāfi, vol. 5, p. 56
4. Qurar-ul-Hikam, p. 236
5. Nahjul-Balaqah, Letter 47, p. 422

Section 20: The Holy Prophet Muhammad, the Apostle Unto the Whole Mankind

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 158

قُلْ يَآ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعاً الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّماوَاتِ وَالاَرْضِ لآ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ يُحيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الاُمِّيِّ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

158. ***“Say: ‘O mankind! I am the messenger of Allah to you all, of Him to Whom belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. There is no god but He. He gives life. And makes to die’. Believe then in Allah and His Messenger, the unschooled prophet, who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him so that you may be guided.”***

Some of orientalists have said that the Prophet of Islam (S) was thinking only for the people of his own region, but when he succeeded he thought to preach other people of the world, too.

In answer to this statement, it should be said that there are some different verses of the Qur’ān containing such words as: ‘you all’, 1 ‘the whole of mankind’ 2 ‘whoever it reaches’ 3 ‘unto the worlds’.4

These Qur’ānic evidences prove that his prophethood was worldly. He was commissioned to be a prophet over all people of the world when he was in Mecca and before gaining his success. It was not so, as those orientalists say, that later he decided to invite all the people of the world.

Imam Hassan Mujtabā (as), the second Imam, has said:

“Once some of the Jewish people came to the Messenger of Allah and said: ‘Do you suppose that you are a prophet the same as Moses was?’ After a while of keeping silence, he answered:

‘Yes. I am the master of the (whole) children of Adam, but I do not boast of it. I am the seal of prophets, the leader of the pious, and the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds.’

*They asked: ‘Whom have you been sent to? To Arabs, or to non-Arabs, or to us?’ Then the above verse was revealed with the meaning that he was sent as a Messenger to the whole mankind.”*5

The repetition of the Qur’ānic word /’Ummi/ in this holy verse and in the sixth verse before this, is an indication to its importance.

However, the prophethood of Mohammad (S) is surely worldly, and a worldly Divine religion needs a worldly leader.

Like any project, his Messengership, of course, progressed stage by stage. At first, the invitation of the Prophet (S) was to the family members, then to the people of’Umm-ul-Qur’ā, Mecca, and, finally, to the whole humankind. The verse says:

“Say: ‘O mankind! I am the messenger of Allah to you all, of Him to Whom belongs the

Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. There is no god but He. He gives life. And makes to die'…"

Another matter is that prophethood is something necessary for Theism and Resurrection. Since Allah (s.w.t.) is the only possessor of the world of existence thoroughly, and life and death are under His control, then the leadership and guidance of human beings should be authorized by Him, too. The holy verse says:

"…Believe then in Allah and His Messenger, the unschooled prophet, who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him so that you may be guided."

Belief in Allah and His Messenger, together with obedience from the Holy Prophet (S), is the secret of guidance, for which the Qur'ān, the Prophet's rules and practice (Sunnah) must be followed.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 159

وَمِن قَوْمِ مُوسَى أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِالحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ

159. ***"And of the people of Moses there is a group who guide by the truth and establish justice thereby."***

Guiding by the truth is a sign of the absence of bigotry, and also an indication of gratitude and following the truth itself. So, this recent group, whom are referred to in this verse, were separate from the pertinacious ones who used to seek pretexts. The holy verse says:

"And of the people of Moses there is a group who guide by the truth…"

Perhaps, the objective meaning referred to this group is those people among the Jews who accepted the invitation of the Messenger of Allah (S).

Therefore, in confronting the minorities, justice should particularly be observed, and their sincere services and accomplishments must not be neglected.

The verse ends as follows:

"…and establish justice thereby."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 160

وَقَطَّعْنَاهُمُ اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ أَسْبَاطاً أُمَماً وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَى مُوسَى إِذِ اسْتَسْقَاهُ قَوْمُهُ أَنِ اضْرِب بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانبَجَسَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْناً قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَشْرَبَهُمْ وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْغَمَامَ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَنَّ وَالسَّلْوَى كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ

مَارَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلكِن كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

160*. “And We divided them into twelve tribal communities; and We revealed unto Moses, when his people asked him for water, (saying): ‘Strike the rock with your rod.’ So twelve fountains gushed forth from it. Each tribe, indeed, came to know its drinking-place. And We outspread the cloud to overshadow them, and We sent down manna and quails upon them, (saying): ‘Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided you.’ And they did no harm to Us but they were doing injustice to their own selves.”*

Several kinds of Allah’s bounties upon the Children of Israel are referred to in this verse. At first, the Qur’ān says that Allah divided them into twelve groups, each of which were a branch of the progeny of Israel. He assigned a just order among them which was far from harsh conflicts.

The verse says:

“And We divided them into twelve tribal communities…”

The next bounty was at the time when the people of Moses (as) were traveling toward Jerusalem in the hot desert where they entangled with a horrible blazing thirst. They asked him for water and Allah revealed him to strike the rock with his Rod, and he did so. After that twelve springs gushed forth from the rock.

The verse says:

“…and We revealed unto Moses, when his people asked him for water, (saying): ‘Strike the rock with your rod.’ So twelve fountains gushed forth from it…”

The water of these fountains were divided among them so regularly that each group knew their own spring very well. The verse says:

“…Each tribe, indeed, came to know its drinking-place…”

Another bounty came to them in that blazing desert, where there was no shelter nor any shadow. The Lord outspread the cloud to overshadow them with the cloud. The verse continues saying:

“… And We outspread the cloud to overshadow them…”

Finally, the fourth bounty was that Allah sent down manna and quails as some delicious and nutritious food for them to eat. The verse says:

“…(saying): ‘Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided you.’…”

But they ate the food and showed ungratitude. By that manner, they did no harm to Allah (s.w.t.), but

they committed injustice to themselves. The verse ends as follows:

"...And they did not harm to Us but they were doing injustice to their own selves."

Some Explanations

The Arabic term /asbāt/ is the plural form of /sibt/ which is used for the children, grandsons, and sub-branches of a family. Every tribe of the Children of Israel were the progenies of one of the children of Jacob.

The Qur'ānic term /manna/ means a kind of food like honey and some herbal expressed juice such as tamarix mannifera, and 'salwa' (a quail) is a bird lawful to be eaten, resembling pigeon and partridge.

During a short moment there, several miracles took place: striking the rock by the Rod, plenty water being gushed forth, the number of fountains as many as the number of the tribes, and so on.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 161

وإِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمُ اسْكُنُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ وَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّداً نَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطِيئَاتِكُمْ سَنَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

161. ***"And (remember) when it was said to them: 'Dwell in this town (Jerusalem) and eat of it wherever you desire, and ask forgiveness, and enter prostrating at the gate. We shall forgive you your faults. Soon We will give more (the portion of) the doers of good'."***

The Qur'ānic term /hittah/ philologically means: 'the descent of something from upward.' There are some other derivations from this term, too. It is used in the sense of request for divine mercy and remission (of sins).

The commandment was that the Children of Israel should ask forgiveness from Allah by means of this word, /hittah/, on their arrival into the holy land of Jerusalem. (But with the thought of mockery, they changed the word.) The verse says:

"And (remember) when it was said to them: 'Dwell in this town (Jerusalem) and eat of it wherever you desire, and ask forgiveness, and enter prostrating at the gate..."

A meaning similar to the content of this verse, with a little difference, has been stated in Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, through verses 58 and 59, too.

In Islamic literature, there are some traditions narrated from the Immaculate Imams of Ahlul-Bayt (as) who have clearly said:

“We are the gate of your ‘hittah’ (forgiveness).”

That is, if you enter inside the orb of our government and mastership, mercy will be bestowed upon you.

By the way, there is a good tidings in this verse which indicates Allah may provide all the material and spiritual needs of humankind in this world nad the next world. So, in order that they can be eligible to enjoy some bounties such as: housing, food, forgiveness, and mercy, He commands them to supplicate, to ask forgiveness, and to prostrate.

Also, with a sincere repentance, Allah forgives a great deal of faults. In this verse He says:

“...We shall forgive you your faults...”

To obtain the divine remission, both supplication and practice are necessary. The verse says:

“...and ask forgiveness, and enter prostrating at the gate...”

However, there should be a difference between a good doer and a wrong doer. In the rank where evildoers can be forgiven, the good doers must be given a higher and a better grace. The verse says:

“...Soon We will give more (the portion of) the doers of good.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 162

فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ قَوْلاً غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِجْزاً مِنَ السَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَظْلِمُونَ

162. *“But those of them who were unjust changed a saying other than that which had been spoken unto them; so We sent upon them a torment from heaven for they had been doing injustice.”*

Sometimes perversion and changing the meanings are made manifestly, as the change of an utterance; and sometimes the frame of an utterance is preserved, but the content and spirit of that subject is changed. The example of the latter is the trick of the Children of Israel for catching fish on the Sabbath, (which will be dealt with in the next verse).

The verse says:

“But those of them who were unjust changed a saying other than that which had been spoken unto them...”

The Qur’ān refers to three kinds of perversion which were performed in the Law of Allah:

1) A pertinacious perversion, like the manner of the Children of Israel who, instead of saying /hittah/

(seeking for forgiveness and remission), said /hintah/ (wheat).

2) A change done deceitfully, like the action accomplished by the Children of Israel when they made some pools in the bank of the sea wherein fish came on the Sabbath,

3) and they hunted them on Sunday. They said they had

4) not hunted fish on the Sabbath. But regarding this subject, Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 65 says:

"And certainly you have known those among you who exceeded the limits on the Sabbath..."

5) A change for their own benefit, like postponing the sacred months in the Age of Ignorance in order to carry on their fight. Since they did not like to cease fighting because of adapting with sacred months, they postponed the months. Then, the verse was revealed, saying

"***Verily the postponing*** (***of the sacred month***) ***is only an addition unto infidelity***..." (***Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 37***)

Thus, the punishment of changing the commandments of Allah is His Wrath and chastisement. The verse says:

"...so We sent upon them a torment from heaven..."

And we should know that the fates of human beings are in their own authority, and that these punishments are the fruit of their own sins and transgressions. The verse continues says:

"...for they had been doing injustice."

1. The verse under discussion
2. Surah Sabā', No. 34, verse 28
3. Surah Al-'An'ām, No. 6, verse 19
4. Surah Furqān, No. 25, verse 1
5. Tafsir-us-Sāfi

Section 21: Punishment For Transgressing the Limits

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 163

وَسْأَلْهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ إِذْ يَعْدُونَ فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حِيتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ شُرَّعاً وَيَوْمَ لاَيَسْبِتُونَ

لاَتَأْتِيهِمْ كَذَلِكَ نَبْلُوهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

163. ***“And*** (***O Muhammad***) ***ask them about the town that was by the sea, when they exceeded*** (***the limits***) ***of the Sabbath when their fish came to them on the day of their Sabbath, appearing on the surface of the water; but on the day they did not keep Sabbath, they*** (***the fish***) ***did not come unto them. Thus did We try them for the transgressions they used to commit.”***

By the command of Allah, hunting fish on the Sabbath was forbidden for this group of the Children of Israel who were living on the bank of the sea. (Maybe, it was the Red Sea, beside the land of Palestine, which is known’Il؟f Harbour today).

But, on that very day, fish were seen with a more tremendous amount, so that people’s mouths watered. This circumstance was a divine trial for them.

Those people exceeded the law of Allah deceitfully, and, by making pools on the bank of the sea and banning the way of the fish therein, they captured them in those pools on Saturdays, the which were easily hunted on Sundays. Then, they claimed that, according to the commandment, they had not hunted them on the Sabbath.

The verse says:

“And (***O Muhammad***) ***ask them about the town that was by the sea, when they exceeded*** (***the limits***) ***of the Sabbath when their fish came to them on the day of their Sabbath, appearing on the surface of the water; but on the day they did not keep Sabbath, they*** (***the fish***) ***did not come unto them. Thus did We try them for the transgressions they used to commit.”***

Therefore, by legal tricks and deceit, the real feature of sins may not be changed, (like making pools on the seaside for hunting fish on the following day).

In one of his sermons, Hadrat Ali (as) has intensively criticized the justification of sins, and the justification of ‘wine’ with ‘date liquor’ (nabith), ‘bribery’ with present, and ‘usury’ with ‘transaction’.[1]

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 164

وَإِذْ قَالَتْ أُمَّةٌ مِنْهُمْ لِمَ تَعِظُونَ قَوْماً اللّهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَاباً شَدِيداً قَالُوا مَعْذِرَةً إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

164. ***“And*** (***remember***) ***when a group of them said: ‘Why do you admonish a people whom Allah will destroy or punish with a severe punishment?’ They said: ‘In order to have an excuse before your Lord, and that they may keep from evil’.”***

It seems that, from the point of behaviour, the Children of Israel were divided into three groups. One

group, who formed the majority, were the violators of Divine Law. The second group were the sympathetic admonishers.

The third group were those who were inattentive to the social evil affairs. The latter ones told the sympathetic admonishers not to make themselves tired, for their preach would not affect the mischief makers and, in any case, the corruptors should be the dwellers of Hell.

But those who enjoined right and forbade wrong said that their action was not useless. They said the least thing was that they were excused with Allah.

Yes, the members of societies are usually found in the category of these three groups.

In Surah Al-Mursal�t, No. 77, verses 5 and 6, we recite:

"And by those who reveal the (Divine) Reminder," "to justify or to warn."

It should be noted that ***'forbidding wrong'*** is necessary for completing the statement and having excuse with Allah. The verse says:

"...They said: 'In order to have an excuse before your Lord..."

We must not justify our faults with ***'Divine will'***. The verse says:

"And (remember) when a group of them said: 'Why do you admonish a people whom Allah will destroy or punish with a severe punishment?'..."

Unfortunately, those who are inattentive to the evil affairs, instead of protesting against the corruptors, protest against those who enjoin the right. But, even if we do not probable a good effect, we must forbid the wrong in order to complete the statement and to have excuse before Allah.

However, godly people are not hopeless of improving the society. The verse concludes:

"...and that they may keep from evil."

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 165-166

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَاذُكِّرُوا بِهِ أَنْجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ السُّوءِ وَأَخَذْنَا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا بِعَذَابٍ بَئِيسٍ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا عَن مَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ

165. ***"So when they forgot what they were reminded of, We delivered those who forbade evil and seized those who were unjust with a dreadful punishment for the transgressions they used to***

commit."

166*. "So when they defied what they had been forbidden from, We said to them: 'Be you apes scouted'."*

In this verse, the Qur'ān implies that finally mammonism overwhelmed them and they forgot the command of Allah (s.w.t.), therefore they confronted the bitter moment of punishment.

The verse says:

"So when they forgot what they were reminded of, We delivered those who forbade evil and seized those who were unjust with a dreadful punishment for the transgressions they used to commit."

Who Were Delivered?

From those three groups of people: (the sinners, the inattentive ones, and the admonishers), only the third group were secured from the punishment of Allah. As the Islamic traditions indicate, when this group, the third group, saw that their admonishments were not effective in the wrong doers, they became worried and said that they would go out of the city.

They left the city at night and went into the desert. Accidentally, by that very night, the retribution of Allah befell upon the couple of the abovementioned groups who were inside the city.

The sort of their retribution is explained in the second verse of the above verses as follows:

"So when they defied what they had been forbidden from, We said to them: 'Be you apes scouted'."

It is clear that the commandment saying ***'Be you'***, here, is a genetic command, which means they changed immediately in the shape of 'apes'.

According to some Islamic literature, of course, those who were transformed continued to live only for a few days, and then they died, so that there could appear no generation from them later.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 167

وإِذْ تَاَذَّنَ رَبُّكَ لَيَبْعَثَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَن يَسُومُهُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَسَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ وإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

167*. "And* (*remember*) *when your Lord proclaimed that He would surely send against them, until the Day of Resurrection, those who would inflict on them a grievous punishment. Verily your Lord is certainly quick to requite* (*evil*)*, and verily He is Forgiving, Merciful."*

This verse and the verse after it point to a part of the worldly retributions of those Jewish people who stood against the commandments of Allah and trod on the truth, justice, and honesty.

At first, the verse says:

"And** (remember) **when your Lord proclaimed that He would surely send against them, until the Day of Resurrection, those who would inflict on them a grievous punishment..."

It is understood from this verse that this rebellious group will never meet a complete calmness, although they establish a government for themselves.

Then, at the end of the verse, it adds that Allah is both quick in punishing those who deserve punishment, and forgiving, Merciful unto those wrong doers who repent. The verse says:

"...Verily your Lord is certainly quick to requite** (evil)**, and verily He is Forgiving, Merciful."

This Qur'ānic phrase indicates that Allah has left the way wide open for them to return in order that no one imagines that a compulsory fate with adversity, retribution, and chastisement has been assigned for them.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 168

وَقَطَّعْنَاهُمْ فِي الاَرْضِ أُمَماً مِنْهُمُ الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِنْهُمْ دُونَ ذَلِكَ وَبَلَوْنَاهُم بِالْحَسَنَاتِ وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

168. ***"And We dispersed them into communities on the earth, some of them being righteous, and some of them otherwise, and We tried them with good things and bad things that they might return."***

It was ordained that for a length of time the Children of Israel visited honour and power, in order that maybe they might become thankful. And, for another length of time, they were involved in calamities that might the sense of repentance and humiliation be renewed in them.

Some of them were virtuous and believed in Islam, while some others pursued corruption, and insisted on their own mammonism and stubbornness.

The verse says:

"And We dispersed them into communities on the earth, some of them being righteous, and some of them otherwise, and We tried them with good things and bad things that they might return."

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 169

فَخَلَفَ مِن بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ وَرِثُوا الْكِتَابَ يَأْخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَذَا الأدْنَى وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا وَإِن يَأْتِهِمْ عَرَضٌ مِثْلُهُ يَأْخُذُوهُ أَلَمْ يُؤْخَذْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِيثَاقُ الْكِتَابِ أَن لاَيَقُولُوا عَلَى اللّهِ إِلاَّ الْحَقَّ وَدَرَسُوا مَا فِيهِ وَالدَّارُ الآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ أَفَلا تَعْقِلُونَ

169*. “Then there succeeded after them* (*an evil*) *posterity* (*who*) *inherited the Book* (*Turah*)*, taking the transitory goods of this lower world, and saying: ‘It will be forgiven us’. And if similar transitory goods were to come to them* (*again*)*, they would take them, too. Was not the covenant of the Book taken with them that they should not attribute anything to Allah except the truth? And they have studied what is in it, while the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who keep from evil. Have you then no sense?”*

In former verses, the words were about the ancestors of the Jews, but in this verse, the statement is upon the children and descendants of them.

At first, the Qur’ān remarks that their descendants inherited the Turah, but they used to prefer the material of this low world to the obedience of Allah. 2 The verse says:

“Then there succeeded after them (***an evil***) ***posterity*** (***who***) ***inherited the Book*** (***Turah***)***, taking the transitory goods of this lower world…”***

Then, the verse implies that when they are hesitating between the struggle of conscience, on one side, and their worldly interests, on the other side, they appeal to some false hopes and say that they do obtain this existing interest, which is in cash, whether it is lawful or unlawful, and since the Lord is Merciful, Forgiving, He will forgive them.

“…and saying: ‘It will be forgiven us’…”

This phrase shows that after committing such an action, they assumed a kind of fleeting regret and a state of extrinsic repentance. But, as the Qur’ān says, this regret and remorse of theirs had no root in them. And that was why if they found another material benefit like that, they would take it, too. 3 The verse says:

“…And if similar transitory goods were to come to them (***again***)***, they would take them, too…”***

However, this part of the verse points to the bribery of some of the Jews and perverting the heavenly verses of the Turah thereby, and also forsaking the ordinances of Allah because of the contrast of those laws with their benefits.

Therefore, next to that, the verse says:

“...Was not the covenant of the Book taken with them that they should not attribute anything to Allah except the truth?...”

If they were not acquainted with the divine verses (of the Turah) and committed such wrong actions, they might have an excuse for themselves. But, the difficulty of the event is in this fact that they had frequently seen the verses of the Turah and had understood them, yet they spoilt them and defied the command of Allah by setting them aside. The verse says:

“...And they have studied what is in it...”

At the end of the verse, the Qur’ān implies that they make mistake, and such actions and these goods will not be useful for them. The fact is that the abode of Hereafter is better for the pious. The verse says:

“...while the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who keep from evil...”

Then the Qur’ān questions them whether they have not any sense to perceive those facts that are so clear. Here is the words of the Qur’ān:

“...Have you then no sense?”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 170

وَالَّذِينَ يُمَسِّكُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلاَةَ إِنَّا لاَنُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ

170. ***“And those who hold fast to the Book and establish the prayer, verily We do not waste the reward of the reformers.”***

This verse points to another group, opposite to the above-mentioned perverted group, who not only avoid any perversion and concealing the Divine verses, but also take hold of them and practice them minutely. The Qur’ān has called this group ‘the reformers’ of the world, and maintains an important reward for them. Concerning them, it says that surely Allah does not waste the great reward that they will have with Him. The verse says:

“And those who hold fast to the Book and establish the prayer, verily We do not waste the reward of the reformers.”

The above-mentioned verse clearly indicates that, without taking hold of the Heavenly Books and Divine commandments, the fulfilment of the true reforms in the world is impossible. This meaning emphasizes this fact, once more, that religion is not something only related to the world of super nature or to the next world.

Religion is effective in the spirit of life for all human beings. It protects the interests of all humankind and

it is alongside the execution of the principles of justice, peace, tranquility and any concepts which are gathered in the vast meaning of the term ‘reform’.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 171

وَإِذْ نَتَقْنَا الْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُ ظُلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُم بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

171. ***“And** (**remember**) **when We plucked the mountain** (**and held it**) **above them as if it were a canopy, and they supposed it was about to fall on them** (**when We told them:**) **‘Hold you firmly what We gave you and remember what is in it, that you may keep from evil’.”***

This is the last verse in this Surah which is upon the life of the Children of Israel. In this verse, the Qur’ān reminds the community of the Jews another happening. The event is both a lesson of admonition and an evidence of giving a covenant. It says:

“And** (**remember**) **when We plucked the mountain** (**and held it**) **above them as if it were a canopy…”

It was so that they imagined the mountain was nigh to fall down over them. Therefore, a shaking horror and anxiety encompassed them, thoroughly their entity, and they began weeping with supplication. The verse says:

“…and they supposed it was about to fall on them…”

It was at the same time that they were in that condition and they were told to hold firm what Allah gave them. The verse continues saying:

“…**(**when we told them:**) **‘Hold you firmly what We gave you…”

They ought to be in awe of Allah’s punishment and fulfil their duty according to the covenants He has taken from them in it. The verse says:

“…and remember what is in it, that you may keep from evil’.”

This means that the entire messengership of Moses (as) and other prophets, and their constant struggles and hard conflicts, as well as the grievous anxieties and laborious hardships that they tolerated, all were for the sake that the command of Allah and the principles of the truth, justice, purity, and piety be executed rather perfectly among all human beings.

1. Nahjul-Balāghah, Sermon No. 156
2. The Arabic word /xalf/ is applied for an ‘impious child ’, while the Arabic word /xalaf/ is applied for a ‘ pious child ’. (Narrated from Majma‘-ul-Bayān)
3. The Arabic term /‘arad/ means any capital or property, but the term /‘ard/ means only the money which is in cush.

Section 22: The Progeny of Adam Will Bear Witness Against Itself

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 172

وإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِن بَنِي ءَادَمَ مِن ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلى شَهِدْنَآ أَن تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ

172. ***“And*** (***remember***) ***when your Lord took from the children of Adam, from their backs, their descendants and made them bear witness over themselves,*** (***and said***)***: ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They said: ‘Yes! We do bear witness.’*** (***This We did***) ***lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection: ‘Verily we were unaware of this’.”***

The Qur’□nic term /□urriyah/ means small children, but it is often used for all the children of a person.

The circumstance of Allah’s taking covenant from the children of Adam has not been stated in this verse.

As some Islamic traditions indicate, after the creation of Adam, all his progenies came out from his back in the form of some intelligent particles and were addressed by the Lord.

They confessed to the Lordship of Allah. Then, all of them returned back to the loin and soil of Adam, in order to come into this world gradually and naturally. This world is called the world of ‘Tharr’ and that covenant is called the ‘covenant of ‘Alast’ or ‘the world of pre-existence’.

The purpose of the world of ‘Tharr’, maybe, is the same world of talents, and the covenant of innate disposition and creation.

That is, at the time of departure of Adam’s children from the loins of fathers into the wombs of mothers in the shape of sperm, which are not more than some minutes, Allah sets the talent and nature of monotheism and seeking truth in their constitution and this divine secret, as an innate sense, is settled in the institution and natural disposition of everybody.

The help of Allah reflects in their intellect in the form of a self-cognizance fact. Allah has asked them through the tongue of creation, and they have answered through the same tongue, too.

We should know that Allah has established monotheism in the innate disposition and constitution of humankind.

The verse says:

“And** (**remember**) **when your Lord took from the children of Adam, from their backs, their descendants and made them bear witness over themselves,** (**and said**)**: ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They said: ‘Yes! We do bear witness.’** (**This We did**) **lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection: ‘Verily we were unaware of this’.”

Thus, human beings can observe the sense of theism in the depth of their own selves, since they have confessed it in the world of pre-existence.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 173-174

أَوْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَآ أَشْرَكَ ءَابَآؤُنَا مِن قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِن بَعْدِهِمْ أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ

وَكَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الآيَاتِ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

173. ***“Or lest you should say: ‘Verily our fathers were idolaters from before and we were descendants after them*** (***following them***)***. Will You then destroy us for what the vain-doers did?’”***
174. ***“And thus do We explain the Signs, and that they may return.”***

In this verse, the Qur’ān has pointed to another aim of this covenant. It implies that Allah has taken this covenant for the sake that they do not say that their fathers were idol-worshippers before them and when they were some children.

So, they could do nothing but following them. Therefore, they said, they should not be punished for the sins committed by some vain-doers. Here is what the verse says:

“Or lest you should say: ‘Verily our fathers were idolaters from before and we were descendants after them (***following them***)***. Will You then destroy us for what the vain-doers did?’”***

Admonition

A great part of the Qur’ān, which consists of many verses in different suras of it, is about the incidents happened among the early nations; such as: the events of Adam and the children of Adam, those of the people of Noah, Hūd, Sālih, Abraham, Lot, Yusuf (Joseph), Jacob, Jethro, Moses, Pharaoh and the like of them.

The aim of stating them has not been simply for referring to the history or telling some stories. They have been stated for **the admonition** of the servants of Allah and advising them through some exhortations in order that they become aware that how graceful and merciful Allah has been with the believers and the pious, so that He has saved them from destructions and calamities, while the people of idolatry, blasphemy, injustice and corruption have faced with many difficulties and destructions.

Thus, regarding this meaning, in the second verse of the holy verses mentioned in the above, the Qur'ān says:

"And thus do We explain the Signs, and that they may return."

The verse means that as Allah stated these verses for you, they are stated and explained for other nations, too, in order that all people reason the Truth by them and return from falsehood towards the Truth.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 175

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي ءَاتَيْنَاهُ ءَايَاتِنَا فَانسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ

175*. "And recite unto them the tale of him to whom We gave Our signs, but he withdrew* (*himself*) *from them, and Satan pursued him, and he became one of the perverse."*

The verse refers to the story of a man from the Children of Israel. At first, that man was among the believers and those who practically carried out the divine verses and sciences, but later, as a result of Satan's temptation, he went astray. In the concerning religious sources, the name of this person has been recorded 'Bal'am Bā'ūrā'.

As it has been narrated from Ali-ibn-Mūsā-ar-Riḍā, the eighth Imam (as), that Bal'am knew 'the Greatest Name of Allah', by which his supplication used to be answered. But finally he went to the court of Pharaoh and turned to be an infidel, while, before that, he was one of the studious preachers of the religion of Moses (as).

The Qur'ān does not directly point out his name in the text, but it mentions his action. Imam Bāqir (as) says that his circumstance adapts to any one who prefers the low desire to the truth.[1]

Such people are found in any time and the subject is not allocated to Bal'am only. The story of Bal'am has been cited in the Turah, too.

Therefore, an aware leader should usually warn people of unexpected dangers. The verse says:

"And recite unto them the tale of him to whom We gave Our signs..."

Whatever high a person promotes he should not become proud, since there is a probability of falling. Usually, the final result of the end of the work is important, not the beginning of it. The higher a situation is, the more dangerous it can be. The verse continues saying:

"...but he withdrew* (*himself*) *from them..."

Yes, the one who takes detached from Allah, will become the prey of Satan. The verse ends as follows:

“...and Satan pursued him, and he became one of the perverse.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 176

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ اَخْلَدَ إِلَى الاَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِن تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَث ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَاقْصُصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

176. ***“And had We willed, We would certainly have exalted him thereby, but he clung to the earth and followed his lust. So his parable is like the parable of a dog; if you attack it, it lulls out its tongue, or if you leave it, it lulls out its tongue. Such is the parable of the people who belied Our Signs. Therefore, relate*** (***unto them***) ***the stories, that they may ponder.”***

The previous subject has been completed in this expressive verse. It implies that if Allah had wished, He could have forcedly kept him alongside the path of right with an exalted rank, by the way of those holy verses and practical sciences. The verse says:

“And had We willed, We would certainly have exalted him thereby...”

But it is certain that forcedly keeping persons alongside the path of truth does not agree with Allah’s way of treatment, which is the custom of choice and free will, and it is not the sign of personality and greatness of a person. So, immediately next to it, the Qur’ān, implying that Allah left him to himself, adds:

“...but he clung to the earth and followed his lust.”

Then, the Qur’ān resembles this person to a dog which, like some thirsty animals, often draws its tongue out of its mouth. The verse says:

“...So his parable is like the parable of a dog; if you attack it, it lulls out its tongue...”

As a result of attaching the intense lust and clanging to the pleasures of the material world, such a person may get a state of unlimited and endless thirst that he always goes after mammonism. This state, in him, is like the state of a rabid dog that, because of its sickness, it has a false thirst and it never drinks to satiety.

Then, the Qur’ān implies that this parable is not allocated to this particular person, but it is for all those who reject the verses of Allah. The verse says:

“...Such is the parable of the people who belied Our Signs...”

This story should be told for them, maybe they think about it and then they take a correct way for themselves. The verse continues saying:

“...Therefore, relate** (**unto them**) **the stories, that they may ponder.”

Bal‘am Ba‘ura, a Mammonish Scholar, Gone Astray!

A great deal of Islamic narrations and statements, as was pointed out before, indicate that the person referred to in this verse had been a man by the name of Bal‘am-B□‘□r□ who lived at the time of Moses (as).

He was counted as one of the well known scholars of the Children of Israel, so that Moses used of him as an effective and strong preacher. He became so exalted in this way that his prayers before Allah were answered.

But, as a result of accepting the promises of Pharaoh and inclining to him, he went astray, thus far that he joined the camp of the opponents of Moses (as), and therefore, he lost all his spiritual ranks.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 177-178

سَآءَ مَثَلاً الْقَوْمُ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَأَنْفُسَهُمْ كَانُوا يَظْلِمُونَ

مَن يَهْدِ اللّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِي وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

177. *“How evil is the parable of the people who belied Our Signs, but they were doing injustice to themselves.”*
178. *“Whomever Allah guides, he is rightly guided, and whomever He leads astray, these are the losers.”*

Through these two holy verses, in fact, the Qur’□n has concluded a general and common result from the story of Bal‘am and other mammonish scholars. The verse says:

“How evil is the parable of the people who belied Our Signs...”

They did not do any injustice to Allah, but they used to do injustice to themselves. The verse says:

“...but they were doing injustice to themselves.”

What injustice is greater than this that they gave their spiritual capitals and scientific informations, which could cause the honour of them and their societies, to the possessors of wealth and power, selling them for a little price.

But, beware that delivering from these kinds of faults and satanic ways is not possible except with the Divine assistance. Therefore, the one whom Allah guides and makes His aid the companion of his way, is the real guided one. The verse says:

“Whomever Allah guides, he is rightly guided…”

And those whom Allah, as a result of their own evil deeds, leads astray, or gives them victory and success for their satanic temptations, are the real losers. The verse continues saying:

“…and whomever He leads astray, these are the losers.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 179

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيراً مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالإِنْسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لاَيَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لاَيُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ لاَيَسْمَعُونَ بِهَآ أُوْلَئِكَ كَالاَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

179. ***“Indeed We have created for Hell many jinn and humans; they have hearts with which they do not understand, and they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. They are as cattle, rather they are more astray. These are the heedless ones.”***

The Signs of Hellish People

Through this verse and the next couple of verses, where the qualities of each group are hinted out, People have been divided into two groups. These two groups are: the hellish people, and the inhabitants of Paradise.

At first, with oath and emphasis, the Qur’ān states about the inhabitants of Hell as follows:

“Indeed We have created for Hell many jinn and humans…”

Allah has created all human beings pure and sinless, but, by means of their own evil deeds, some groups of them make themselves candidates for Hell. The end of these people is dark and inauspicious. There are some other people who make themselves candidate for Paradise. The end of such people is happiness and felicity.

After that, the verse summarizes the qualities of the hellish group in three phrases. The first quality is that:

“…they have hearts with which they do not understand…”

Their second quality is that they have clear eyes for seeing the truth but they do not observe the feature

of the facts and pass by them like some blind persons. The verse says:

"...and they have eyes with which they do not see..."

Their third quality is that they have safe and sound ears, but they do not hearken to the truth and right words, and, like the deaf, they deprive themselves from hearing the divine truth. The verse says:

"...and they have ears with which they do not hear..."

In fact, they are like cattle, because the privilege of man to animals lies in vigilant thought, clear-insightedness, and the hearing ears that, unfortunately, these hellish people have lost all of them. The verse says:

"...they are as cattle..."

They are, of course, worse than cattle and more astray. The verse continues saying:

"...rather they are more astray..."

Cattle have not the talents and possibilities that human beings have. Men, with the intellect, clear-insightedness, and the hearing ears that they have, can gain all kinds of progress and development.

But, as a result of sensuality and tending toward mean things, they may leave these faculties and talents in vain. Such people are some neglectful persons, and therefore, they wander in the deviated path of life. The verse finally says:

"...These are the heedless ones."

They are nigh to the fountain of water of life, but they are crying of thirst. The gates of felicity are open to them, but they do not even look at them.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 180

وَلِلّهِ الاَسْمَآءُ الْحُسْنَى فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَآئِهِ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

180. ***"And to Allah belong the most beautiful names, so call on Him by them, and leave those who blaspheme His names. Soon they shall be requited for what they were doing."***

The Qur'ānic phrase /'asmā'ul husnā/ has been mentioned three times in the whole Qur'ān, which are: the verse under discussion, Surah Al-'Isrā', No. 17, verse 11. and Surah Tāhā, No. 20, verse 8.

All the names of Allah are beautiful, and He possesses all the Virtues and Names. Yet, in Islamic literature, emphasis has been laid on 99 Names. It has been narrated that whoever calls on Allah by

these names, his prayer will be answered, if it be the will of Allah (s.w.t.).

In this holy verse, the Qur'ān points to the situation of the inhabitants of Heaven and explains their qualities.

In order that people come out of the row of the hellish persons, at first it invites them to pay a careful attention to the Beautiful Names of Allah, when it says:

"And to Allah belong the most beautiful names, so call on Him by them..."

The purpose of 'the beautiful names' is the attributes of Allah which are wholly good and wholly 'beautiful'.

The objective meaning of 'calling on Allah' by the Beautiful Names is not only to utter those names simply by the tongue, and to say, for example, O' knower of the Unseen, O' Almighty, and O' the Most Merciful of all merciful, but, in fact, the purpose is that we try to settle these qualities in our selves as much as possible.

In other words, we should have His attributes and make our manner similar to that of Allah with our limited attempt.

Upon the commentary of this verse, there has been cited a tradition from Imam Sādiq (as) who has said:

"By Allah, we are the beautiful names."

This statement points to the fact that there is a strong ray from those divine attributes reflected in their beings, and that the cognition of them helps to the cognition of His Pure Essence.

Then the Qur'ān warns people to avoid perverting the Names of Allah and to leave those who blaspheme them. It says:

"...and leave those who blaspheme His names. Soon they shall be requited for what they were doing."

The objective meaning of 'blaspheming His Names', here, is that we do not pervert their pronunciations and their concepts. We also should not qualify Him with the attributes which are not suitable to Him, like the action of the Christians who believe in Trinity, or that we adapt His attributes to His creatures.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 181

وَمِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَآ أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ

181. ***"And of those*** (***whom***) ***We have created are a people who guide*** (***others***) ***by the Truth and***

establish justice therewith."

The objective meaning of the Arabic word /'ummah/ (community), mentioned in this holy verse, is the people of Muhammad (S), who are the best community among all communities. It is also cited in the Islamic traditions, recorded by the Sunnis, that the objective meaning of the word is the adherents of Ali-ibn-Abit□lib (as).

Some Islamic traditions indicate that Muslim believers will be divided into seventy three groups that only one group of them are the blessed.2

Therefore, the pivot of guidance and government should be but the Truth, even though the number of the advocators of the Truth and guidance may be small. The verse says:

"And of those (whom) We have created are a people who guide (others) by the Truth..."

And we must also know that those persons are worthy that, besides accepting guidance, try to establish a system of Truth. Mere cognition of the Truth is not enough, but practice and distribution is important, too. The above holy verse concludes as follows:

"...and establish justice therewith."

1. N□r-uth-Thaqalayn, the commentary.
2. N□r-uth-Thaqalayn, the commentary; and Tafsir-ul-Burh□n

Section 23: The Resurrection

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 182-183

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُم مِنْ حَيْثُ لاَيَعْلَمُونَ

وَأُمْلِي لَهُمْ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ

182. "And those who belie Our Signs, soon, step by step, We will draw them on from where they do not know."
183. "And I will grant them respite. Verily My devising is strong."

In these couple of holy verses, one of the punishments of Allah (s.w.t) about many of the arrogant sinners has been stated which will be done upon them in the form of a 'gradual punishment'.

The derivation of the Arabic term /'istidrāj/ (consign to a gradual punishment) has been used in the Qur'ān in two verses. One of them is the verse under discussion, and the other is in Surah Al-Qalam, No. 68, verse 44, both of which are about the deniers of the Divine verses. Through the first verse, concerning the punishment of these beliers, whose lives will be interlaced, Allah says:

"And those who belie Our Signs, soon, step by step, We will draw them on from where they do not know."

The same meaning is emphasized in the second verse. It implies that it is not such that Allah punishes these people at once and with precipitation. But He respites them sufficiently for admonishment and awareness.

And, when they do not attend it, He will entangle them with some difficulties, because only those haste that are powerless and fear that they miss opportunities. The verse says:

"And I will grant them respite..."

But, Allah's plots and punishments are so strong and exact that none is able to flee from them. The verse says:

"...Verily My devising is indeed strong."

This verse warns all sinners that they should take the postponement of Divine punishment as a reason neither for their own sanctity and uprightness, nor for the weakness and inability of Allah.

They should not consider that the bounties and favours they enjoy are the signs of their nearness to Allah. It may happen that these bounties and victories that they receive become the preparation of the gradual punishment of Allah.

The Lord grants them abundant favours and, by respiting them, He promotes them, but finally, He leaves them to fall down so intensively that there remains no trace from them and their whole entity and their history will be completely interlaced.

It is narrated from Imam Sādiq (as) who, upon the commentary of this verse, said:

"The purpose of this verse is a sinful person whom Allah gives a bounty and he counts it for his goodness, while it causes him to be neglectful of seeking forgiveness for the sin he has committed."[1]

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 184

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا مَا بِصَاحِبِهِم مِن جِنَّةٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلاَّ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ

184. ***"Have they not reflected that there is no madness in their companion (the Prophet of Islam)? He is naught but a plain warner."***

Occasion of Revelation

The Islamic commentators have mentioned the following meanings upon the occasion of revelation of this verse in their commentary books:

When the Prophet (S) was living in Mecca, one night he went upon Saf Mountain and invited people to monotheism. He called to all people, and to the whole tribes of Quraysh in particular, and told them to beware the punishment of Allah.

He continued speaking until late at night. The local idol-worshppers of Mecca said that their companion had become mad since he was shouting the whole night until morning. At that moment the above-mentioned verse was revealed and gave them a knockdown answer.[2]

In this verse, at first, Allah answers the vain statement of the idol-worshippers by which they said the Prophet (S) was mad. The Qur'n says whether they did not contemplate to know that their companion (the Prophet) had no sign of madness. Here is the answer of Allah:

"Have they not reflected that there is no madness in their companion (the Prophet of Islam)?..."

He (Muhammad) (S) had been living among them for more than forty years. They were acquainted with his thought, intellect, and management. Then, how did they suddenly accused him like that? Then, following to that, the Qur'n says that he (S) is only a plain warner that advises his society to beware the dangers they are faced with. The verse says:

"He is naught but a plain warner."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 185

أَوَ لَمْ يَنظُرُوا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللّهُ مِن شَيْءٍ وَأَنْ عَسَى أَن يَكُونَ قَدِ اقْتَرَبَ أَجَلُهُمْ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ

185. ***"Have they not considered the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and whatever Allah has created, and that maybe their term has already drawn near? Then in what other words after this will they believe?"***

In order to complete the previous statement, this verse invites them to study the world of existence, including the heavens and the earth. The verse says:

"Have they not considered the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and whatever Allah has

created...”

This contemplation is for that they know that this vast world of existence, with its amazing systematic order, has not been created in vain. There has surely been a certain goal in it, and the invitation of the Prophet (S), in fact, has been in pursuance of the same goal of creation, i.e., the development and training of humankind.

Then, for the sake that they be awakened from the sleep of negligence, the Qur’ān implies whether they have not ponder on this matter that the end of their lives might be near.

So, if they do not believe today, and do not accept the invitation of this Messenger to the revealed Qur’ān with those numerous clear signs, which words will there be after this that they believe in? The verse says:

“...and that maybe their term has already drawn near? Then in what other words after this will they believe?”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 186

مَن يُضْلِلِ اللّهُ فَلا هَادِيَ لَهُ وَيَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

186*. “Whomever Allah leads astray there is no guide for him, and He will leave them in their contumacy wandering blindly.”*

At last, the statement upon the sinners is concluded in this verse as such that those whom Allah leads astray they will have no guide and Allah leaves such people bewildered in their transgression. This is the result of their continuous indecent deeds. The verse says:

“Whomever Allah leads astray there is no guide for him, and He will leave them in their contumacy wandering blindly.”

Such kind of meanings has been stated particularly upon the group of sinners who zealously and arrogantly show obstinacy against the rights and facts. They treat such, as if a curtain has fallen over their eyes, ears, and hearts. These dark curtains are the result of their own deeds, and this is the meaning of the phrase ***‘Allah leads astray’.***

يَسْئَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَاهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِندَ رَبِّي لا يُجَلِّيهَا لِوَقْتِهَآ إِلاَّ هُوَ ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّماوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ لاَ تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلاَّ بَغْتَةً يَسْئَلُونَكَ كَأَنَّكَ حَفِيٌّ عَنْهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ اللّهِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لاَيَعْلَمُونَ

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 187

187*. “They ask you about the Hour* (*of Resurrection*) *when it will set in. Say: ‘Its knowledge is only with my Lord. None but He can manifest it at its time. Heavy is it in the heavens and the earth. It will not overtake you but suddenly’. They ask you, as if you were well-informed of it. Say: ‘The knowledge of it is only with Allah, but most people do not know’.”*

The infidels of Quraysh sent a number of persons to the scholars of the Jews in order to learn some difficult questions so that when they would ask them from the Prophet (S) he could not give any answer to them and they might condemn him. One of these questions was that they asked about the exact time of the occurrence of Resurrection.

The Qur’ānic term /’ayyān/, mentioned in this verse, has been used for asking the time. The Arabic word /assā‘ah/ refers to the beginning of Resurrection, while the word /al-qiyāmah/ means the time of reckoning in Hereafter when the rewards and retributions will be given.[3]

The Arabic term /mursā/ means ‘that which is fixed with regard to time or place’. Thus the Qur’ānic phrase /jibāl-un-rāsiyāt/ means: ‘fixed and firm mountains’.

The word /haffiyy/, used in the verse, means a constant researcher. This epithet, concerning to the Prophet (S), means as if he (S) had completely researched the time of the occurrence of Resurrection Day and had asked it from Allah and knew it well.

The idea of the heaviness of the Hereafter in ***‘the heavens and the earth’*,** maybe, refers to the destruction of celestial globes, darkening of the sun, revolution of the earth, etc.

However, the lack of knowledge about the features and details of Hereafter does not harm the principal of the belief in Resurrection. No one is aware of the time and the place of his death, but this situation can not be taken as a reason for denying the principal of death. The verse says:

“They ask you about the Hour (***of Resurrection***) ***when it will set in. Say: ‘Its knowledge is only with my Lord. None but He can manifest it at its time. Heavy is it in the heavens and the earth. It will not overtake you but suddenly’. They ask you, as if you were well-informed of it. Say: ‘The knowledge of it is only with Allah, but most people do not know’.”***

Once the Holy Prophet (S) was asked about the reappearance and coming out of Hadrat Ghā’im (as). He answered:

“His example is like the time (*of Resurrection*)*.”*

This statement means that the time of his reappearance resembles the time of Resurrection. Then, he (S) recited this verse:

*“...None but He can manifest it at its time. Heavy is it in the heavens and the earth. It will not overtake you but suddenly’...”*4

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 188

قُل لاَّ أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعاً وَلا ضَرّاً إِلاَّ مَا شَآءَ اللّهُ وَلَوْ كُنتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لاَسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ إِنْ أَنَا إِلاَّ نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

188. ***“Say: ‘I own for my self neither any benefit nor harm except what Allah may please; and had I known the Unseen, I would have acquired much good, and no evil would have touched me. I am not but a warner and a giver of glad tidings for a people who believe’.”***

Occasion of Revelation

It happened that one day some people of Mecca came to the Prophet (S) and said that if he had communication with the Lord, would He inform him of the future expensiveness and cheapness of goods so that thereby he could supply whatever was beneficial and ward off whatever was harmful; or would He aware him of drought or of different regions with abundant water so that he could move from dry provinces into blissful lands? At this time, the verse was revealed and answered them.

Only Allah Knows the Unseen

In the previous verse, it was said that no one knows the time of Resurrection but Allah (s.w.t.). Through this verse, now, the lack of knowledge of Unseen among persons, in general, is referred to.5

By the first sentence of the verse, Allah commands His Messenger, Muhammad (S), thus:

“Say: ‘I own for my self neither any benefit nor harm except what Allah may please...”

All powers existed in the world come from the source of Allah, the Exalted, and no person has originally any power from his own self. It is He Who has granted these abilities to human beings.

After stating this matter, the Qur’ān points to another important question which was under the demand of a group of people. Allah commands His Messenger (S) to say that he was not cognizant of the Unseen and its secrets. In this regard, the verse continues saying:

“...and had I known the Unseen, I would have acquired much good, and no evil would have touched me...”

Then, the real position of the Prophet (S) and his Messengership has been pointed out through a short and explicit sentence, as follows:

“...I am not but a warner and a giver of glad tidings for a people who believe’.”

1. Tafsir-us-S▯fi, p. 256
2. Tafsir-us-S▯fi, p. 257
3. Tafsir-i-Mar▯qi.
4. Narrated by Imam Rid▯ (as), cited in N▯r-uth-Thaqalayn.
5. The commentators of the Qur’▯n has cited a great deal of matters about both this verse and ‘ the knowledge of Unseen ’ in their commentary books.

Section 24: The Conclusive Warnings Against Polytheism

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 189

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِن نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلاً خَفِيفاً فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ فَلَمَّآ
أَثْقَلَت دَعَوَا اللّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ ءَاتَيْتَنَا صَالِحاً لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ

189. ***“He it is Who created you from a single soul, and of the same (kind) did He make his mate, that he might take rest in her. So when he covered her, she bore a light burden and passed (sometime) with it. Then when she grew heavy, they both invoked Allah, their Lord: ‘If you give us a righteous son, certainly we shall be of the grateful ones’.”***

Another part of the circumstances of the pagans and the way of their thinking and the answer to their mistakes are hinted to here. And, since the former verses referred to the Unity of Divine Acts, the substitutive verses are counted as their complement. At first, it says:

“He it is Who created you from a single soul, and of the same (kind) did He make his mate, that he might take rest in her...”

The couple had a pleasant life with each other, but when the spouse had sexual intercourse with his wife, she bore a light burden such that, at the beginning, that burden did not bother her and she could easily continue performing her affairs. The verse says:

“...So when he covered her, she bore a light burden and passed (sometime) with it...”

Later, by passing some days and nights, her burden gradually grew heavier. When she became heavy, the couple expected a child and hoped that Allah would grant them a righteous child. The verse says:

"...Then when she grew heavy, they both invoked Allah, their Lord..."

Therefore, they both invoked their Lord as follows:

"...'If you give us a righteous son, certainly we shall be of the grateful ones'."

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 190-191

فَلَمَّآ ءَاتَاهُمَا صَالِحاً جَعَلاَ لَهُ شُرَكَآءَ فِيمآ ءَاتَاهُمَا فَتَعَالَى اللّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

أَيُشْرِكُونَ مَالا يَخْلُقُ شَيْئاً وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ

190. ***"But when He gave them a righteous son, they (Adam's children) ascribed partners to Him in what He had given them. But Exalted is Allah above any partners that they ascribe (to Him)."***
191. ***"Do they ascribe (to Him) partners that create nothing and themselves are created?"***

Allah gave Adam and Eve the safe and sound child that they had asked for, but thereafter the children of Adam and Eve ascribed partners to Allah. The Qur'ānic phrase ***'they ascribed partners to Him'*** means 'the children of the couple ascribed partners to Him'. The verse says:

"But when He gave them a righteous son, they (Adam's children) ascribed partners to Him in what He had given them. But Exalted is Allah above any partners that they ascribe (to Him)."

Then, the second verse questions whether they ascribe some creatures as partners to Allah that not only they cannot create anything but also they themselves are created, since the fact is that the worshippers have produced those partners, therefore, they are more incapable and incompetent than the worshippers. The verse says:

"Do they ascribe (to Him) partners that create nothing and themselves are created?"

Surah al-'Araf – Verses 192-193

وَلا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ نَصْراً وَلآَ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ

وإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى لا يَتَّبِعُوكُمْ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ أَدَعَوْتُمُوهُمْ اَمْ أَنتُمْ صَامِتُونَ

192. ***"And they can neither help them nor help themselves."***
193. ***"And if you invite them unto guidance, they will not follow you; it is the same to you whether***

you invite them or whether you are silent.”

These created things are able to help neither the worshippers nor themselves to ward off the evil events that happen against them. This verse continues the meaning of the previous verse by saying:

“And they can neither help them nor help themselves.”

Thus, if you invite the objects of worship to what is useful for their guidance, or you ask them to guide you, they will not pursue your purpose and they do not answer you as Allah answers you. The verse says:

“And if you invite them unto guidance, they will not follow you…”

Whether you invite them or you be silent for inviting them, it is the same to you, because there is not any rescue and felicity for them, and they are unable to do anything. It says:

“…it is the same to you whether you invite them or whether you are silent.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 194

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللّهِ عِبَادٌ اَمْثَالُكُمْ فَادْعُوهُمْ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

194. “Verily those whom you call upon other than Allah are creatures like your own selves. So call on them, then they should answer you if you are truthful.”

The objective meaning of the Arabic term /‘ibād/ (worshipping creatures) may be the creatures or men who are taken as deities, like Jesus (as) or the angels. Or, the purpose may be the very idols which the idol-worshippers imagine as ‘gods’.

Therefore, worshipping needs both reason and privilege. Worshipping creatures or human beings, like our own selves, has neither any reason nor any privilege. The verse says:

“Verily those whom you call upon other than Allah are creatures like your own selves…”

Another matter is the silence of deities which itself is the sign of their inability and incompetence.

Besides, a deity must promote its servant, not to stop him. The verse continues saying:

“…So call on them, then they should answer you if you are truthful.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 195

اَلَهُمْ اَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَآ اَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ يَبْطِشُونَ بِهَآ اَمْ لَهُمْ اَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَآ اَمْ لَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا قُلِ ادْعُوا
شُرَكَآءَكُمْ ثُمَّ كِيدُونِ فَلاَ تُنظِرُونِ

195*. “Have they feet with which they walk? Or, have they hands with which they hold* (*firmly*)*? Or, have they eyes with which they see? Or, have they ears with which they hear? Say* (*O’ Prophet!*)*: ‘Call your associates, then contrive against me and give me no respite’.”*

The Arabic term /yabti��n/ is derived from /bat�a�a/ which means ‘to take or seize by force’.

This meaning has been used as a reprimand upon the pagans who take some partners for Allah. These partners are more incapable than they themselves, since they can walk, see, hear and act, but those lifeless statues do not have these abilities, and if they were wished to do something they would be unable. So, why do the idol-worshippers, as a notion, adore them?

Strange to say, pagans do not accept the Prophet (S) since he says he is a human as they are, but they are convinced with idols which are not like them even, or they are lower than them. The verse says:

“Have they feet with which they walk? Or, have they hands with which they hold* (*firmly*)*? Or, have they eyes with which they see? Or, have they ears with which they hear? Say* (*O’ Prophet!*)*: ‘Call your associates, then contrive against me and give me no respite’.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 196

إِنَّ وَلِيِّيَ اللّهُ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّالِحِينَ

196*. “Verily my guardian is Allah Who sent down the Book, and He guards the righteous.”*

Following the former verse which, addressing pagans, said they themselves and their idols could not harm the Prophet (S) the least thing, this verse refers to its reason, and says:

“Verily my guardian is Allah Who sent down the Book...”

It is not only the Prophet’s self that He guards but He also supports and guards all the good doers and the righteous, and His grace and favour encompass them. The verse concludes as follows:

“...and He guards the righteous.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 197-198

وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ لاَيَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَكُمْ وَلآ اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ

وإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى لاَيَسْمَعُوا وَتَرَاهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ لاَيُبْصِرُونَ

197. ***“And those whom you call upon other than Him can neither help you, nor help themselves.”***

198. ***“And if you call them to guidance, they do not hear; and you see them looking towards you, but they do not see.”***

The verse implies that the idols and deities of pagans are not able to help them or defend them. They are also incapable even to help their own selves. This meaning has been repeated here again, because in previous verse, the purpose was to premand the idol-worshippers, while here the purpose is to discriminate between Allah (s.w.t.) and something which is not adorable.

It seems that the Prophet of Islam (S) says that his Deity helps him but their deities help neither them nor their own selves. The verse says:

“And those whom you call upon other than Him can neither help you, nor help themselves.”

The second verse indicates that if you call the idols to guidance and rectitude, they do not hear your invitation. That is, if you call idolaters to the upright religion, they do not hear you to follow. The verse says:

“And if you call them to guidance, they do not hear…”

The verse, addressing idol worshippers, implies that they have made the idols in a shape that they gaze them, but they do not see anything. This looking, of course, is metaphorical, since an inanimate thing cannot look at something. The verse continues saying:

“…and you see them looking towards you, but they do not see.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 199

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

199. ***“Keep to forgiveness and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant.”***

Here, the Qur'ān, in a very short and interesting way, states the circumstances of leadership, preaching, and guiding people. It also corresponds with the previous verses which referred to the theme of the propagation of pagans.

At first, addressing the Prophet (S), the verse points to three parts of the duties of leaders and preachers. It begins telling the Holy Prophet (S) not to be strict with people and to accept their excuses; and to avoid demanding them anything beyond their ability. However, he should conciliate people. The verse says:

"Keep to forgiveness..."

The second command is that he (S) should enjoin people to do good deeds and what wisdom approves as worthy achievements, and Allah has introduced them as good things. The verse says:

"...and enjoin kindness..."

In the third stage, it commands him to have patience and endurance against the ignorant people without having any dispute with them. The verse says:

"...and turn away from the ignorant."

In the course of their activities, the leaders and preachers may face with some fanatic, obstinate, ignorant and unaware persons, or some people whose level of thought and morals are very low. Such people might abuse them, accuse them, and put them into trouble.

Therefore, the way of solving this difficulty is not disputing with such ignorant people. The best way is to tolerate them with patience and ignoring these kinds of actions of theirs. Experience has shown that this way is better to be paved for awakening the ignorant and quenching the fire of their anger, envy, and bigotry.

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 200

وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللّهِ إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

200*. "And if a temptation from Satan afflicts you, then seek refuge in Allah; surely He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."*

There is another command in this verse which forms the fourth duty of the Islamic leaders and preachers. They should be careful that on their way usually the satanic temptations, in the form of social position, wealth, lust and the like of them, attract their attention. The command of the Qur'ān is as follows:

“And if a temptation from Satan afflicts you, then seek refuge in Allah; surely He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 201-202

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَآئِفٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فإِذَا هُم مُبْصِرُونَ

وإِخْوَانُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَهُمْ فِي الْغَيِّ ثُمَّ لايُقْصِرُونَ

201. ***“Verily, those who keep from evil, when a visitation from Satan afflicts them they become mindful. Then behold, they see (aright).”***
202. ***“And their brethren draw them into perverseness, and they do not stop short.”***

Predominance upon the temptations of Satan is stated in this verse. It implies that when the satanic temptations surround the pious ones, they remember Allah, the All-Mighty and the Glorious, and His endless bounties, and that committing sin brings forth some inauspicious results for them with the painful retributions of Allah.

At this time, the dark clouds of evil temptations will get apart from their hearts (minds) and they clearly see the path of truth, and then they choose it. The verse says:

“Verily, those who keep from evil, when a visitation from Satan afflicts them they become mindful. Then behold, they see (aright).”

As the above verse points out, the pious ones can relieve themselves from the grasps of the temptations of Satan under the light of the remembrance of Allah. But, those who are stained with sin, and are counted as brethren of Satan, are captured in his net.

In this regard, the second verse mentioned in the above, implies that the brethren of Satans ceaselessly draw the immoral persons forward into aberration and they not only do not stop doing that, but also constantly continue their cruel attacks. The verse says:

“And their brethren draw them into perverseness, and they do not stop short.”

Yes, Satans follow the track of the believing persons and the pious ones. They do not stop turning round them in order to delude them.

The satanic temptations and mental suggestions go everywhere, and like microbes, which seek for the weak bodies they also seek for those whose faiths are weak to influence in them.

“…when a visitation from Satan afflicts them…”

The temptations of Satans sometimes act from a distance. Surah Tāhā, No. 20, verse 120 says:

"But Satan whispered unto him...".

It is sometimes done through penetrating into men's soul and spirit. Surah An-Nās, No. 114, verse 5 says:

"Who whispers into the breasts (hearts) of the people."

It sometimes works by means of companionship. Surah Az-Zukhruf, No. 43, verse 36 says:

"...and he shall be his close companion."

And, sometimes it is by means of turning round and affliction. This case is referred to in the current verse where it says:

"...when a visitation from Satan afflicts them...".

It may happens that sometimes the religious scholars, trainees, and those who try to make peace might be suspiciously visited with the purpose that a particular line of thought be inspired upon them. Therefore, they must be careful not to incline toward the desires of the enemy, and they should refuge Allah.

The remembrance of Allah gives insight to man and keeps him safe from evil temptations. The verse says:

"...They become mindful..."

Correct belief is very important. If a society becomes pure and pious from the point of morals, politics, economy, and army, the communications and hauntings of satanic persons can not affect them.

Allah takes the pious ones and the good doers under His guardianship, but the impious persons will be encompassed with the satanic brotherhood.

"And their brethren..."

The final word of the verse is that there is no finite or limitation for the way of perversion, and Satan has no pity in casting aberration upon the believers. The verse says:

"And their brethren draw them into perverseness, and they do not stop short."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 203

وإِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِم بِآيَةٍ قَالُوا لَوْلا اجْتَبَيْتَهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَتَّبِعُ مَايُوحَى إِلَيَّ مِن رَبِّي هَذَا بَصَآئِرُ مِن رَبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِقَوْمٍ

يُؤْمِنُونَ

203. "And when you do not bring them a sign, they say: 'Why do you not choose one?' Say: 'I follow only what is revealed to me from my Lord. This (Qur'ān) is insight from your Lord, and a guidance and a mercy for a people that believe'."

The Arabic word /'ijtibā'/ is derived from the root /jibāyat/ which originally means 'to store water in a pound'. This term is also used for 'collecting taxes'. Therefore, any gathering of chosen things has been called /'ijtibā'/, in the Arabic language.

It happened that, as a result of delay in revelation, the recitation was ceased for several days. Some of the disbelievers told the Prophet (S) why he had not chosen a verse to proclaim. Or, maybe the meaning of the verse is that they said why he did not choose the miracle they had asked him to bring and that he brought another miracle which was not according to their taste.

However, infidels are often the seekers of pretexts. They considered the verses of the Qur'ān which were revealed to the Prophet (S) as some chosen material, not the Divine revelations.

The verse says:

"And when you do not bring them a sign, they say: 'Why do you not choose one?' Say: 'I follow only what is revealed to me from my Lord..."

A godly leader should not be affected by some pretexts or undue wants, but he must express his subject matter clearly and decisively.

Leadership and guidance should be based upon insight. Therefore, the Qur'ān is a Book of both mental knowledge and insight, and also a guidance of practical movement. But only the possessors of Faith can enjoy this kind of guidance, and those blind-hearted people who are aloof from the insight and guidance of Allah, are also deprived from His mercy.

The verse continues saying:

"...This (Qur'ān) is insight from your Lord, and a guidance and a mercy for a people that believe'."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 204

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْءَانُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

204. "And when the Qur'ān is recited, then listen to it and be silent, so that mercy may be shown to you."

The Islamic jurisprudents do not give decree upon the act of keeping silence to be absolutely obligatory, except in prayer. This verse emphasizes that when the Qur’ān is being recited, from the point of courtesy, the audience ought to keep silence and listen to the recitation of the verses.

It happened that Hazrat Ali (as) was establishing prayers and a hypocrite began reciting the Qur’ān loudly. Ali (as) kept silence and after that he continued reciting the rest of the Surah.

The Arabic term /’insāt/ philologically means to be silent in order to listen.

Thus, the Qur’ān, which is a means of insight and mercy, should be politely listened to when it is being recited. The verse says:

“And when the Qur’ān is recited, then listen to it and be silent...”

The sound of the recitation of the Qur’ān should pass through the ears and affects on the heart (mind). In this case the person may be shown the divine mercy to. The verse concludes as follows:

“...so that mercy may be shown to you.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 205

وَاذْكُر رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعاً وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالآصَالِ وَلا تَكُن مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

205. ***“And remember your Lord within your self in humility and awe; without being loud of voice, in the morning and the evening, and do not be of the heedless ones.”***

The discipline of the recitation of the Qur’ān was referred to in the previous verse. Now, here in this verse, the discipline of the remembrance of Allah (s.w.t.) and supplication is dealt with.

The Arabic term /’āsāl/ is the plural form of the term /’asil/, which means ‘around the time of sunset, or evening’.

Some of the commentators have rendered the holy term /ẕikr/ (remembrance), mentioned here in this verse, into the statutory prayers’.

The Qur’ān admires not only the verbal remembrance of Allah(s.w.t.), but also the heartily and innate remembrance of His Essence.

The Lordship of Allah is permanent, then His remembrance should be maintained ceaselessly, too. The verse says:

“And remember your Lord within your self...”

That remembrance is spiritually helpful for the believers which is performed amorously and touchingly every morning and evening. In this concern, the verse says:

"...in humility and awe..."

This meaning should be noted that the divine prophets must also ceaselessly remember Allah, still less the others.

The phrase ***'in the morning and the evening'*** means 'at the beginning of an action and at the time of making decision' and also when we come to a conclusion, we ought to remember Allah.

"...in the morning and the evening..."

The remembrance of Allah removes negligence when it is done without any pretence and shouting, otherwise it will become itself a kind of amusement and negligence. The verse says:

"...without being loud of voice, in the morning and the evening, and do not be of the heedless ones."

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 206

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لاَيَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُ وَلَهُ يَسْجُدُونَ

206. ***"Verily those who are*** **(*stationed*)** ***near your Lord do not disdain to worship Him, and they glorify Him and prostrate for Him."***

It is probable that the phrase ***"...those who are*** **(*stationed*)** ***near your Lord..."*** encompasses both the angels and the pious servants of Allah who connect His Essence and feel themselves at His presence.

Be not proud of your worship, for Allah has some angels that are always in the state of worshipping.

"Verily those who are **(*stationed*)** ***near your Lord..."***

The worst kind of arrogance is 'disobedience and arrogance before Allah' by abandoning His worship.

It is certain that an arrogant person will never reach the rank of being stationed near to Allah. We must be humble before Allah (s.w.t.), and we ought to be attentive to His purification, too. We must specialize our prostrations for Him alone. The verse continues saying:

"...do not disdain to worship Him, and they glorify Him and prostrate for Him."

Surah Al-Anfal, Chapter 8

No. 8 (75 verses)

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

Surah Al-Anfal contains seventy five verses. This Surah has been revealed in Medina, (except its six verses). Its revelation occurred after the revelation of Surah Al-Baqarah.

There are some lessons in this Surah concerning the history of Divine prophets and their followers, and also the manner of the Prophet of Islam (S) in relation with Muslims.

There are several subjects referred to in this Surah, such as: Treasury of the Muslims, things taken as spoils of war, the Battle of Badr, the ordinances of Holy Struggle, the night when the Prophet (S) was decided to be snabed in his bed and Ali (as) laid in the couch of him (Laylat-ul-Mabit), and the qualities of the true believers.

Most of the verses of this Surah are about the Battle of Badr. It was the first war of Muslims against the disbelievers. This war happened after thirteen years of Muslims' patience. In this war they enjoyed the Divine helps and victory. That is why this Surah has also been entitled 'Surah Badr'.

Besides stating the affairs of the Battle of Badr, some specialties of the virtuous soldiers against the enemies of Truth are stated in this holy Surah.

The Virtue of Recitation of the Surah

Imam Sadiq (as) has said:

"The one who recites Surah Al-'Anfal and Surah Al- Bar⍰'at (with attention to their meanings and their warnings) every month, will he not be involved with hypocrisy at all and will be among the true followers of Amir-ul-Mu'mineen (as)..."

Section 1: The Battle of Badr

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 1

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنفَالِ ۖ قُلِ الْأَنفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ ۖ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ ۖ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1*. “They ask you about ‘Anfal’. Say: ‘Anfal’, belong to Allah and the Messenger; so be in awe of Allah, and set aright the relations between yourselves, and obey Allah and His Messenger if you do believe’.”*

The Arabic word /su’ al (question) and its derivations have been mentioned about 130 times in the Qur'an, where the Arabic phrase /yas' alunaka/ (they ask you) is found in its 15 occurrences.

The Arabic term /' anfal/ is the plural form of /nafl/ with the sense of ‘excessive’ and ‘remission’. A gracious man who remits very much is called in Arabic /nufil/.The progeny which was remitted to Abraham (as) has been counted as a superervogation. The Qur'an says:

“And We gave him Isac, and Jacob, as a further gift…” (Surah Al-‘Anbiya, No. 21, verse 72).

In technical terminology of the Islamic jurisprudence, the meaning of the Arabic word ‘anfal’ encompasses: natural resources’ public wealth, the spoils of war, the wealth whose owner is unknown, like a land whose owner has left it out, the properties of the heirless dead, forests, valleys, reed-beds, unprofitable lands, mines, and so on.

According to what the history denotes, when the Battle of Badr was ended, there remained some spoils of war for the Muslims. The opinions were divided that what should be done with the spoils, to whom they belonged, and who were the first that had precedence.

Then, the Prophet of Allah (S) himself began dividing the spoils of the war. He gave them to all concerning persons justly and equally in order to remove the undue discriminations of the Age of Ignorance, and to support the oppressed, though some individuals were annoyed of that equality.

Since the Surah is wholly about the Battle of Badr, this verse refers to the spoils of war, too, but it does not exclusively belong to it.[1]

Explanations

1- Public wealth should be in the authority of the most sacred and the most beloved persons.

"They ask you about 'Anfal'. Say: 'Anfal' belong to Allah and the Messenger..."

2- An Islamic system, or an Islamic government, needs an economical support, and 'Anfal' are considered as this support.

3- In an Islamic Community, the source of answering and stating all the public questions and economical affairs is the divine leader. In the societies before Islam, the method of dividing spoils of war was arranged upon the basis of some undue discrimination.

Therefore, in the Battle of Badr, which was the first occasion where the Muslims obtained some spoils of war, they asked this question from the Messenger of Allah (S).

4- In Islam, there are laws for everything, even for the unprofitable deserts.

5- Whatever the Messenger of Allah (S) spends is around the pivot of the divine aims:

"...the 'Anfal' belong to Allah and the Messenger..."

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"The share of Allah is spent under the control of the Messenger of Allah (S)."

6- The protection of public wealth needs Purity and piety. The verse continues saying:

"...so be in awe of Allah..."

7- To observe the unity and to make peace between people are obligatory for all believers. The Qur'an says:

"...and set aright the relations between yourselves..."

8- Belief not only exists in the heart, but also has an outward manifestation and practical obedience. The verse says:

"...and obey Allah and His Messenger if you do believe'."

9- Only taking part in fight is not the sign of Faith. It's necessary conditions are also to give up hope unto the spoils of war, and observing brotherhood and submission before the divine leader.

"...if you do believe."

10. Some persons may pass the examination of giving soul by attending the Holy Struggle, but

sometimes they fail in the trial of spending wealth and in the trial of division of the spoils of war as well. For, the main principal in the Holy Struggle is the triumph of the Truth against the falsehood. Then, the question of 'the spoils of war' is of the secondary importance.

11- The person who wishes and intends to improve his society must himself be of the pious ones:

"...So be in awe of Allah and set aright..."

Basically, among the most important actions in Islam are reconciliation, creation of good relation, wiping out the annoyances and enmities and changing them into sincerity and friendship.

This subject has been taken so important in the Islamic teachings that it has been introduced as one of the most exalted practices.

When Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) was in the bed of martyrdom, as his last testaments to his children, he said:

*"Verily I heard from your ancestor, the Prophet (S) who said: 'Reconciliation is better than the kinds of recommended prayer and fasting'."*2

Some Islamic traditions indicate that the reward of reconciliation between people is much more than that of the recommended prayer and fasting. Imam Sadiq (as) told Mufaddal:

*"If there happens a conflict between two persons of our followers, spend out of my wealth and produce reconciliation between them."*3

Surah Al-Anfal – Verses 2-3

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

2. *"Verily believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts quake, and when His Signs are recited to them, it increases them in faith, and in their Lord (alone) do they trust."*
3. *"Those who keep up prayer, and spend (benevolently) out of what We have provided them."*

The true believers are those who are in owe of Allah (s.w.t) because of His glorification and veneration. That is, when the speech is delivered upon Allah's justice, retribution, and power, they dread, and when the speech is about His bounties, kindnesses, graces, and rewards, they feel peace in themselves; as the Qur'an says:

***“... now surely by Allah's remembrance are the hearts set at rest.”* (*Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 28*).**

Thus, there is no contrast between these two verses, because fear relates to the remembrance of Allah's retribution and peace, but peace and rest relates to the remembrance of Allah's forgiveness and kindness.

Moreover, whenever a believer remembers the Divine bounties and forgiveness of Allah, he obtains a favorable opinion and he rests, but when he remembers his own sins, he becomes inconvenient and anxious. The verse says:

“Verily believers are only those who, when Allah is mention, their hearts quake…”

The Arabic term /wajila/ means ‘to fear, apprehend’ which is accompanied with sadness.

Then the verse continues saying:

“…and when His Signs are recited to them, it increases them in faith…”

In that circumstance, their faith and their certainty will be increased.

“…and in their Lord* (*alone*) *do they trust.”

Such people trust in Allah in any conditions and they rely on Him for the affairs of their lives.

Again, believers are those who establish prayer (which is the manifestation of the relation with Allah) and spend in charity and benevolently out of what Allah has given them as their sustenance.

The phrase ***‘they keep up prayer’*** mentioned in the verse, instead of saying ‘they recite prayer’, points to this fact that not only they themselves keep up prayer but also they behave so that this firm relation with Allah will be kept always and everywhere. Here is the verse:

“Those who keep up prayer, and spend* (*benevolently*) *out of what We have provided them.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 4

أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا ۚ لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ

4. *“These are the believers in truth; they have ranks with their Lord, and forgiveness, and a noble sustenance.”*

Allah, the Exalted, implies that those who have such qualities are indeed eligible to be called ‘believers’. The verse says:

“These are the believers in truth; they have ranks with their Lord, and forgiveness, and a noble sustenance.”

That is, these persons have some high ranks and degrees of honor in Heaven, and the Lord will provide them with His forgiveness and a great and permanent sustenance. That is why some commentators have said that ***‘a noble sustenance’*** means a permanent sustenance which is vast and pure, and is given them without any reproach. In Hereafter, this noble sustenance will be the eternal Heaven.

By the way, it should be said that these qualities belong to some distinguished and notable believers, not to the totality of the believers. As if it wants to say that the distinguished and chosen believers are those who have these qualities.

Thus, there is no problem that believing persons be equal from the point of Faith, but different from the point of worship. The evidence of this meaning is that the heartily fear is not enjoined, but it is recommended.

The prayer and spending out of sustenance, mentioned in the previous holy verse, are irrespective of the obligatory and recommended ones. Then, it is clear that the verses refer to some distinguished and chosen believers, not to all of the believers.

However, Faith should be accompanied with love and piety; and a humble heart is the source of virtues. It is the heart which trembles and quakes first, and, thereafter, the increase of Faith, keeping up prayer and trusting in Allah come forth.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 5

كَمَا أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَارِهُونَ

5. ***“Just as your Lord caused you to go forth from your house with the truth, through a party of the believers were certainly averse*** **(*to it*)*.”***

As the scarcity of forces and possibilities caused some early Muslims to feel difficult and heavy to go to Holy War against the enemy, dividing the spoils of the Battle of Badr was heavy, too. These annoyances pass away, of course, The Messenger of Allah. However, must think of the real interests and the fulfillment of Allah’s command, else, the dislike of this and that always exists.

The verse says:

“Just as your Lord caused you to go forth from your house with the truth, through a party of the believers were certainly averse **(*to it*)*.”***

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 6

يُجَادِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَمَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ

6. ***"They dispute with you about the truth after it became clear, as if they see they are being driven unto death.*** **"**

The dispute of a group of Muslims with the Prophet (S) was alongside the Battle of Badr. They said that since they had not enough possibilities and troops, they could go out for taking possession of the properties of the merchants of Quraysh, not for fighting against the forces of Quraysh.

Some of them delivered some reasons for the lack of conflict, while some others, like Miqdad, said that they would not treat like the people of Moses (as), sitting and saying that you go for fighting, but they themselves were fighters and whatever the Prophet (S) commanded they would accept.

But, in this course, the coward persons, who were not ready to fight, disputed with the Prophet (S).

However, not the whole companions of the Prophet (S) were just and obedient to the command of the Prophet (S) as the verse says:

"They dispute with you about the truth after it became clear..."

In order to flee from taking part in fight, always the coward and self-indulgent persons attack to dispute and justification, and they seek for excuses.

Therefore, if the spirits end motives are not safe and sound, the march of such soldiers towards fight is not more than carrying corpse. The verse says:

"...as if they see they are being driven unto death."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 7

وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ الشَّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ
وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ

7. ***"And (remember) when Allah promised you one of the two parties should be yours, and you loved that the one unarmed should be yours; but Allah desires to verify the truth by His words and to cut off the roots of infidels."***

The Arabic term /saukat/ means 'thorn and bayonet', and it is the symbol of an armed group. The

objective of the Qur'anic phrase /qayra oati-sh-saukat/ is the very unarmed merchants. The verse says:

"And (remember) when Allah promised you one of the two parties should be yours, and you loved that the one unarmed should be yours…"

It happened that once Abu Sufyan, as the chief of a commercial caravan, set out to travel. Before that, tile pagans of Mecca had confiscated the properties of the immigrant Muslims. So in order to weaken the power of the pagans and to recompense that transgression, the Prophet (S) made some Muslims prepared to attack the commercial caravan.

Abu Sufyan was informed of the matter and immediately made the people of Mecca aware of it. There were gathered about one thousand equipped fighters to defend that commercial group which consisted of forty people.

In the desert, at a place located between Mecca and Medina, three groups met face to face, (Muslims, the pagan troops, and the merchants). In spite of the fact that Muslims had not come out with the aim of fighting and they had not any martial equipment with them, but Allah assisted them with some unseen helps and, finally, the Muslims won the battle.

In the Battle of Badr, which occurred on seventeenth of Ramadhan in the second year of Hijrat, the numbers of Muslims were 313 strivers while the number of pagans was thrice as much they were, where Abujahl and seventy other pagans were killed, and, also, seventy pagans, together with him, were taken as captives.

Thus, sometimes the Divine Will may be fulfilled by the (hands of the believers, and the fact is that the remembrance of the divine helps can be a factor in strengthening the Faith.

We must also know that the victory of the truth over falsehood is more magnificent than the economical income, and triumph is not only that which comes forth with some fighters and war equipments, the main factor is Allah's Will.

So, the aim of Holy Struggle in Islam is the manifestation of the truth and destruction of falsehood. And, it also should be known that the manifestation of the truth can be done by means of the Divine Statements, the Divine saints, and Allah's laws, agents and ways of treatment.

Therefore, victory and honor may be obtained under the shade of Holy Struggle and (self -sacrifice, not with political discussions and collusions; which are performed by the help of deceits and trickeries. The verse says:

"…but Allah desires to verify the truth by His words and to cut off the roots of infidels."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 8

لِيُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَاطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ

8. ***"That He might verify the truth and bring vanity to naught, though the guilty were averse (to it)."***

This verse works as the most important encouragement for Muslims. The Divine promises are not for the sake of personal material interests of the individuals, but they have been decreed for the verification of the truth and the destruction of falsehood. The verse says:

"That He might verify the truth and bring vanity to naught..."

You should not think of the hate and the wrath of the disbelieving enemy. Allah will verify His Will, although the sinners do not like it. The verse says:

"...though the guilty were averse (to it)."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 9

إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُمْ بِأَلْفٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ

9. ***"(Remember) when you were calling upon your Lord for succor, and He answered you (saying): 'I shall assist you with a thousand of the angels following one another'."***

The Qur'anic term /murdif/, mentioned at the end of the verse, is derived from the Arabic term /'irdaf/ in the sense of 'row', and 'following one after another'. Here in this verse, it means that these helps are continued. These very helps are also referred to in Surah Al-i-'Imran, verse 124 as ***'three thousand of angels'*** and in its following verse, the words about the Divine help are said:

"with five thousand of angels distinguished".

Perhaps, these divine helps had been bestowed upon them because of their perseverance. That is, the more Muslims persevered in that Battle, the more unseen helps were added for them.

As it was said before, (*verse 7 of the current Surah*), the number of Muslim strivers in the Battle of Badr was one third of that of pagans. Moreover, their war-equipments as well as their spiritual preparation were very little. Therefore, the Messenger of Allah (S) invoked, saying:

"O' Allah! do manifest whatever You promised me. O' Allah! If this group (of Muslims) be killed, You will

not be worshipped in the earth."

Explanations

This holy verse attracts our attention to several points as follows:

1- Allah (s.w.t) is the key of answering supplications. The verse says:

"(Remember) when you were calling upon your Lord for succor, and He answered you..."

2- Allah may remit without any invocation, but invocation is one training way out of divine ways.

3- The supplications and invocations which are offered by strivers in the midst of battlefields are effective, because their invocations will be answered.

4- Do not forget the days of affliction and the helps of Allah (s.w.t), since; the remembrance of Allah's bounties elevates the spirit of thanksgiving in man. The verse concludes:

"... (saying): 'I shall assist you with a thousand of the angels following one another'."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 10

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

10. ***"And Allah did not appoint it, save as good tidings and that your hearts thereby might be at rest; and no victory is there save from Allah, surely Allah is the Mighty the Wise."***

The descent of the assisting angels for helping the believers has been repeatedly mentioned in the Qur'an. Even at the time of death and giving soul, Allah sends an angel to protect the believers from the satanic temptations by inspiring the Truth to them.

There are two kinds of inspiration in the creation of Allah. One of them is from the side of Allah's angels, which inspires calmness, like the current Surah, verse 12, which says:

"(And remember) when your Lord revealed unto the angels, (saying): 'Verily I am with you, so confirm those who believe. I will cast fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve...'".

Another kind is the inspiration of dread which is done by Satan. For example, the Quran says:

"It is only Satan that causes his friends to fear..." (Surah' Al-i- Imran, No. 3, verse 175).

Explanations

The assisting angels came down to increase spiritualities of the believers, not to destroy the pagans. The verse says:

"And Allah did not appoint it, save as good tidings..."

(Historically, it is clear who was killed and who was the killer of the slaughtered, but, in the Battle of Badr, the majority of the slaughtered among the pagans were killed by the sword of Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as)).

The victory of the believers in the Battle of Badr was obtained neither as a result of their originative faculty and martial design, nor for their arms, nor because of the angels, but it was only from the side of Allah. The verse says:

"and that your hearts thereby might be at rest; and no victory is there save from Allah, surely Allah is the Mighty the Wise."

1. Al-Mizan, the commentary.
2. Nahj-ul-Balaghah
3. Usul-I-Kafi, Chapter 'Reconciliation', tradition No.2

Section 2: The Battle of Badr

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 11

إِذْ يُغَشِّيكُمُ النُّعَاسَ أَمَنَةً مِنْهُ وَيُنَزِّلُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ بِهِ وَيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمْ رِجْزَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيَرْبِطَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ الْأَقْدَامَ

11. (*Remember*) *when He made the slumber fall upon you as a security from Him and sent down water from the sky upon you to purify you with it and take away from you the uncleanness of Satan and to fortify your hearts, and to steady* (*your*) *footsteps thereby.*

When the Battle of Badr occurred, at first the wells of drinking water were under the control of the enemy and the Muslims were terrified. After that, it rained and the land under their feet became firm so that they would not slip, and it used them to be encouraged.

Maybe, the purpose of the Qur'anic phrase: ***"to steady roar footsteps"*** is the very 'perseverance', not to steady feet on the land drenched by rain.

During the war, the ability of having a slumber for a striver is a great bounty of Allah. It both removes the occasional fatigue and does not let the enemy have the opportunity of a light attack.

By the help of Allah's Will, it is also possible for a striver to have a calm-giving sleep while confronting the mass of armed enemies. But, if He does not please, there will not be a comfortable sleep possible in the best gardens either, or the sleep may not be a calm-giving one.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 12

إِذْ يُوحِي رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۚ سَأُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ

12. “(*And remember*) *when your Lord revealed unto the angels,* (*saying*)*: ‘Verily I am with you, so confirm those who believe. Soon I will cast fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Therefore smite above the necks, and smite every finger of them’.”*

One of other divine bounties upon the Muslim strivers in the Battle of Badr was the horror that Allah cast into the hearts of the pagan enemies and terribly weakened their spirits. In this regard, the verse says:

“(And remember) when your Lord revealed unto the angels, (saying): ‘Verily I am with you, so confirm those who believe…”

Allah said that soon He would cast fear and horror into the hearts of the infidels. The verse says:
“…Soon I will cast fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve…”

This fact was truly wonderful that the powerful troops of Quraysh were so frightened that some of them were in terrible horror to combat with the small number of Muslim strugglers in the Battle.

Then the verse reminds them the command that He had ordained upon the Muslims in the battle-field of the Battle of Badr by the way of the Prophet (S).

The command was that, at the time of fighting against those pagans, they should avoid striking some uneffective blows and not to spend their strength in that state, but they should smite severely upon the entity of the opposite party, upon above their necks; that is, upon their brains and heads. The verse says:

“…Therefore smite above the necks…”

And, by smiting their fingers, they should cause the enemies’ hands and feet to become inactive. The holy verse continues saying:

“…and smite every finger of them’.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verses 13-14

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُّوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

ذَٰلِكُمْ فَذُوقُوهُ وَأَنَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابَ النَّارِ

13. ***"That is because they opposed Allah and His Messenger; and whoever opposes Allah and His Messenger, then verily Allah is severe in retribution."***
14. ***"That*** (***is your award***)***, therefore taste it, and*** (***know***) ***that for the disbelievers is the chastisement of the*** (***Hell***) ***Fire."***

They were deserving of that Punishment so that their heads and their fingers should be smited, because they had raised to fight against Allah (s.w.t) and His Messenger (S). The verse says:

"That is because they opposed Allah and His messenger..."

Then, the holy verse threatens the opponents of Allah and His Messenger, when it says:

"...and whoever opposes Allah and His Messenger, then verily Allah is severe in retribution."

Those who stand to fight against Allah and His Messenger (S), will be destroyed in the world and, in Hereafter, they will abide in an eternal and severe chastisement.

Through the second verse, the Quran says Allah has provided the punishment of destruction and captivity for them to taste in this world. The verse says:

"That (***is your award***)***, therefore taste it..."***

That is, this is the decree of Allah. Then, they should examine the taste of the decree of Allah in this world, and know that in other world both they and the totality of infidels will be involved with the divine painful punishment. The verse says:

"...and (***know***) ***that for the disbelievers is the chastisement of the*** (***Hell***) ***Fire."***

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 15

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا زَحْفًا فَلَا تُوَلُّوهُمُ الْأَدْبَارَ

15. ***"O' you who have Faith! when you meet those who disbelieve*** (***to attack***) ***in battle, then do not***

turn your backs to them.”

The Arabic word /zahf/ means: ‘to crawl, creep’ and ‘to drug on the ground. Since the movement and advance of a large army from the distance seems that it crawls and proceeds, it is called such.

The abundance of the forces of the enemy cannot be taken is an allowance to flee from the battle-field.

The verse says:

“O’ you who have Faith! when you meet those who disbelieve (to attack) in battle, then do not turn your backs to them.”

Imam Rida (as), upon the philosophy of the banning of escape (from the battle-field), in a tradition has said:

“Flight is the weakness of religion, contempt of the leader of the Truth, encouraging the enemy, and wiping out the school of law.”[1]

Among the advantages that Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as) had, and to which as an example he himself sometimes referred, was the very matter of flight from the battle-field. He has said:

“Verily I have never fled from (the abundance of enemy in) any battle (although I have participated in many battle-fields), and none combated me save that I satiated the earth from his blood.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 16

وَمَنْ يُوَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبُرَهُ إِلَّا مُتَحَرِّفًا لِقِتَالٍ أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزًا إِلَىٰ فِئَةٍ فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ

16. ***“And whoever turns his back to them on that day, unless withdrawing to fight again or removing to join another troop, he has incurred wrath from Allah, and his abode is Hell; and an evil destination it is.”***

In Islam, it is unlawful to flee from battle-fields, but there are two exceptions mentioned in this verse for it. One of them is that the escape is done with the purpose of renewing the equipments and the situation and the second is to remove in order to join another group of Muslims, so that they attack wholly with together.

In some commentary books, there have also been mentioned some other instances. For example: flight with the aim of giving information to Muslims, or protecting some more important entrenchments.[2]

These examples are also some extentions of the first aspect.

The Arabic term /mutuharrifan/, mentioned in the verse, is derived from /harrafa/ (to pervert), and means

‘one who turns aside’ in order to make the enemy tired and to pervert him and, then, to strike.

The Qur’anic word /mutuhayyizan/, also mentioned in this verse, means: ‘one who goes aside’ in order to join to another group of Muslim strivers when the striver feels lonely and is unable to continue fighting.

However, flight from the battle-field is one of the great sins for which Allah has warned His wrath and punishment.

The verse says:

“And whoever turns his back to them on that day, unless withdrawing to fight again or removing to join another troop, he has incurred wrath from Allah, and his abode is Hell; and an evil destination it is.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 17

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ ۚ وَلِيُبْلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءً حَسَنًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

17*. “You did not slay them, but Allah slew them; and you (O’ Muhammad) did not throw when you did throw, but Allah threw, that He might test the believers by a gracious trial from Himself. Verily Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”*

In order that Muslims might not be proud of the victory in the Battle of Badr and that they would not rely on their own bodily power alone, but they should make their minds and spirits clear and encouraged with the remembrance of Allah and His helps, the Quran says:

“You did not slay them, but Allah slew them…”

Then, it addresses the Holy Prophet (S) saying that it was not he who threw dust and sand unto the faces of them in that battle, but Allah (s.w.t) threw. The verse immediately after that continues saying:

“…and you (O' Muhammad) did not throw when you did throw, but Allah threw.”

In the continuation of the verse, the Qur’an points to another important matter. The fact is that the battle-field in the Battle of Badr was a trial place for Muslims from the side of Allah. The verse says:

“…that He might test the believers by a gracious trial from Himself…”

Then, the verse is concluded with this holy, phrase:

“…Verily Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

That is, Allah has heard the invocations of the Prophet (S) and the believers, and He was aware of the truthfulness of their intention and of their sincerity. That was why that He bestowed His grace upon all of them and made them victorious over their enemy.

In future, too, Allah (s.w.t) will treat Muslim believers according to the intention and standard of the sincerity and level of perseverance that they will show.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 18

ذَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُوهِنُ كَيْدِ الْكَافِرِينَ

18. *"That (was the grace of Allah) for you, and that Allah weakens the plan of disbelievers."*

The beginning word of the verse /oalikum/ (that) points to the situation of the Muslims in the circumstances of the Battle of Badr. It reminds them the divine helps, which were sent from heaven to the earth, and the honor and victory bestowed upon the Prophet of Islam (S). As if, the holy verse would have said: 'That was the grace of Allah upon you'. The verse says:

"That (was the grace of Allah) for you..."

Thus, if the strivers act according to their duty in battle- fields against the enemy, and obey the divine leader, Allah will also nullify the enemy's plots against them. The verse continues saying:

"...and that Allah weakens the plan of disbelievers."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 19

إِنْ تَسْتَفْتِحُوا فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمُ الْفَتْحُ ۖ وَإِنْ تَنْتَهُوا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ تَعُودُوا نَعُدْ وَلَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

19. *"(O' infidels!) If (Islam's) victory you are seeking, the victory has already come upon you, and if you desist, it will be better for you. But if you return, We (too) shall return, and your forces shall avail you nothing though they may be many, and (know) that Allah is with the believers."*

The addressee of this verse may be either the pagans who were defeated in the Battle of Badr, or the Muslims who disputed upon the division of the spoils of war. The evidence for the first meaning is the connection of this verse with the previous one which says:

"...and that Allah weakens the plan of disbelievers..."

Also, it was the expression of Abujah, the commander of pagan troops, which he uttered when he was going to come out of Mecca. He held the curtain of Ka'ba, and said:

"O' God! make victorious of these two groups the one that is more guided."

When he said this sentence, he was sure of his own victory, but later he defeated.

And, if it addresses the Muslims, it is a warning to them, saying that after that victory they would leave put their protests. Therefore, if they had returned to their murmurs and protests, Allah would have also withheld His grace from them again. In that case, the enemies would be delivered and overcome them.

However, Allah's wrath and grace depend on our choice and our treatment. Allah has completed the argument and has shut all the doors of seeking excuses and pretexts. The verse says:

"(O' infidels!) If (Islam's) victory you are seeking, the victory has already come upon you, and if you desist, it will be better for you..."

The largeness of population has no role or function before Allah's wrath, and certainly Allah is with the believers. The verse says:

"...But if you return, We (too) shall return, and your forces shall avail you nothing though they maybe many, and (know) that Allah is with the believers."

1. Recorded in Nur-uth-Thaqalayn.
2. Narrated from the of Fi-zilal-il-Qur'an

Section 3: Obedience to Allah and His Messenger

Surah Al-Anfal – Verses 20-21

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ

20. ***"O' you who have Faith! Obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not turn away from him while you hear (him)."***

21. ***"And be not like those who say: 'We heard', but they do not hear (indeed)."***

In the Qur'an thoroughly, the commandment of the obedience from the Messenger of Allah (S) has occurred next to the obedience from Allah. In eleven occurrences the term /'ati'un/ (do obey) has been mentioned after the Qur'anic phrase:

"Be in awe of Allah".

In this verse, although both the obedience from Allah and the obedience from the Messenger are referred to, the objective is the disobedience from the Messenger, (not from Allah), especially in the Battle of Badr and his commands concerning the military affairs.

Therefore, for the continuation of the order of the truth, people should always be recommended to be obedient unto the Divine leader. The verse says:

"O' you who have Faith! Obey Allah and His Messenger..."

It should also be known that leaving the obedience from the Prophet (S) is the disobedience from Allah. The verse continues saying:

"...and do not turn away from him while you hear (him)."

In this obedience, the obedience from the Divine leader, truthfulness is the necessary condition, and only the act of 'hearing' is not enough. The verse says:

"And be not like those who say: 'We heard', but they do not hear (indeed)."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 22

إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الصُّمُّ الْبُكْمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

22. ***"Verily the worst of animals in the sight of Allah are the deaf, the dumb, who do not understand."***

The Arabic term /summ/, mentioned in the verse, is the plural form of /asamm/ which means 'deaf' ; and the Qur'anic term /bukm/ is the plural form of /'abkam/ which philologically means 'dumb'.

Those who do not accept the teachings of divine prophets are differently defined in the Qur'an.

Sometimes they are resembled to the dead, as it is recited in its two occurrences:

"Surely you do not make the dead to hear..." (Surah Ar-Room, No. 30, verse 52); and (Surah An-Naml, No. 27, verse 80)

Sometimes they are resembled to beasts:

"...and eat as the beasts eat...". (***Surah Muhammad, No. 47, verse 12***)

Sometimes they are introduced worse than the beasts, as the Qur'an says:

"...they are as cattle, rather they are more astray..." (***Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 179***)

Sometimes they are considered as the worst creatures, as the verse under discussion says:

"Verily the worst of animals in the sight of Allah..."

Since 'the statements' which are not fulfilled accordingly and 'the hearings' which are uneffective in action are counted one of the greatest afflictions of the human societies, which can be the origin of kinds of misfortunes, again the Qur'an emphasizes on this subject once more in this very verse, and in a delicate and nice statement, it follows that meaning by saying:

"Verily the worst of animals in the sight of Allah are the deaf, the dumb, who do not understand."

Also, in view of the fact that the Qur'an is the Book of practice, and not merely a ceremonial book, thoroughly it lays emphasis on the consequences of deeds. In this verse, too, those who have safe ears but they do not pave the way of hearkening to the revelations of Allah, and do not follow the words of truth and the programs which lead to happiness, are considered as earless persons.

And, those who have a sound tongue but keep silence when they should defend the truth are considered as some deaf and dumb persons.

Such people neither struggle against injustice and mischief, nor do they lead the ignorant, nor do they enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, nor do they invite others to the way of truth, but they apply this great bounty of Allah in the way of idle talks, backbiting, flatteries before the possessors of wealth and power, or they often make use of it for perverting the right and strengthening the falsehood.

The Qur'an counts those who have the bounties of intellect, talent, and capability, but do not contemplate properly, as some mad ones.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 23

وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَأَسْمَعَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ

23. ***"And if Allah had known any good in them, He would have made them hear; and*** (***even***) ***if He had made them hear, they would have turned away, swerving aside."***

Obstinate persons are divided into several groups. Some of them are not ready even to listen to the

truth. The revelation about them is recited:

“And those who disbelieved said: Do not listen to this Qur’an…” (***Surah Fussilat, No. 41, verse 26***)

Some of these obstinate persons listen and understand it, but they distort it.

Some others have not the ability of discrimination because of their innate extra attachments, envies, enmities and callous nesses. The verse says:

“And if Allah had known any good in them He would have made them hear; and (***even***) ***if He had made them hear, they would have turned away, swerving aside.”***

Therefore, we must seek for the facilities of enjoying of Allah's grace in ourselves.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 24

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ ۖ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

24. ***“O you who have Faith! Answer Allah and the Messenger when he invites you to that which gives you life, and know that Allah intervenes between a man and his heart, and that unto Him you shall be gathered.”***

There are different kinds of life:

1- Vegetal life:

“…Allah gives life to the earth after its death…” (***Surah Al-Hadid, No. 57, verse 17***)

2- Animal life:

“…the giver of life to the dead…” (***Surah Fussilat, No. 41, verse 39***)

3- Mental life:

“…who was dead then We raised him to life…” (***Surah Al- An’am, No. 6, verse 122***)

4- Eternal life:

“…O! would that I had sent before for (***this***) ***my life!”*** (***Surah Al-Fajr, No. 89, verse 24***)

The purpose of the life, which comes into being by the acceptance of the invitation of prophets, is not the animal life, since without the effects and affluence of prophets this sort of life exists, too. Then, the objective of this life is the mental, intellectual, and spiritual life.

The phrase: '***Allah intervenes between a man and his heart***' indicates that Allah is aware and present everywhere, and He encompasses everything so that He is closer to us than our jugular vein is. All bounties and successes belong to Him, and the activities of intellect and soul are under His authority, too.

However, the acceptance of the Prophet's invitation is the same as the acceptance of Allah's invitation; and the real life of man lies in Faith and righteous deed, to which prophets have invited, too.

The verse says:

"O you have Faith! Answer Allah and the Messenger when he invites you to that which gives you life..."

The ordinances of Islam gives spiritual life to the believers, the same as some medicine or surgery can be life-giving to a sick person.

Going alongside the way of Allah (s.w.t) and divine prophets (as) is the real life, while abandoning it is the death of humanity.

According to the Islamic literatures, one of the aspects of goodly life is the acceptance of the call of the Prophet of Islam (S) to the subject of mastership of Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as) and his Ahl-ul-Bayt (as).[1]

He who believes in Allah's omnipresence and omnipotence does not disobey the invitation of prophets. Therefore, as long as you are alive and you have respite, embrace the Truth. (According to this interpretation, the phrase ***'...Allah intervenes between a man and his heart',*** metaphorically, means death.)

"...and know that Allah intervenes between a man and his heart..."

Among the aspects of the phrase: ***'Allah intervenes between a man and his heart'*** there are: the effacement of infidelity and confirming Faith, the effacement of negligence and doubt and confirming recollection and certainty.[2]

All of you will be gathered on the Resurrection Day, then do respond to the invitation of prophets positively. The verse ends as follows:

"...and that unto Him you shall be gathered."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 25

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً ۖ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

25. “And keep from the evil of an affliction which shall not smite in particular those of you who committed injustice (but all of you); and know that Allah is severe in retribution.”

The content of the previous verse was upon the acceptance of the Prophet's invitation to ‘the goodly life’. Here, in this, verse, the Qur’an says if you do not accept his invitation you will be involved with an affliction whose fire encompasses everyone. The verse says:

“And keep from the evil of an affliction which shall not smite in particular those of you who committed injustice (but all of you)...”

The Arabic term /fitnah/ has been applied in the sense of idolatry, infidelity, trial, torture, and so on.

The former verse ordained to the obedience from the Prophet (S) while here, in this verse, the command is unto ‘***being in awe of an affliction***’. It is understood that the lack of obedience from the Prophet (S) is '***affliction***'. Thus the concept of the verse is the same concept as the Surah, Al-i-‘Imran, No. 3, verse 103, which is recited[3]:

“And hold fast by the cord of Allah all together, and do not separate...”

Mischief and indecency destroys the entity of a system, and its damage reaches everybody. One of the examples of this meaning was the mischief of the rulers of Umayyads. They put aside the mastership of ‘the leader of the truth’ and, consequently, they set the Muslims into abasement for centuries. When this verse was revealed, the Prophet (S) said:

“Whoever transgresses in Ali's vicegerency after my death, it is as if he has denied my messengership and the prophethood of the prophets before me.”[4]

Thus, the members of a society, besides their own duties, should feel responsibility for the deeds of others, since the reflections of everybody's evil actions may afflict the surrounding people, too. It is similar to the person who is inside a ship and makes a hole in it. By his action, he causes that all the people in the ship to be-drowned.

Therefore, neither you yourself make a mischief, nor adhere with the mischief makers, nor be silent when they make mischief: ***“And keep from the evil of an affliction”***; and do know that being in awe of the evil of affliction is ‘awareness’, not ‘resignation’.

We must be aware not to be involved with the evil afflictions and disturbances when they come forth. Ali (as) says:

“During evil disturbances be like an adolescent camel that has neither a back strong enough for riding nor udders for milking.”[5]

The Prophet (S) in a tradition has said:

"When seditions appear among the community, be with Ali, although he is alone." 6

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 26

وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ أَنْتُمْ قَلِيلٌ مُسْتَضْعَفُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ تَخَافُونَ أَنْ يَتَخَطَّفَكُمُ النَّاسُ فَآوَاكُمْ وَأَيَّدَكُمْ بِنَصْرِهِ وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

26. ***"And remember when you were few, deemed weak in the land, and were fearful that people would snatch you away, but He gave you refuge*** **(*in Medina*)*, and strengthened you with His help, and provided you with the good things*** **(*of sustenance*)** ***in order that you might be thankful."***

Once again the Quran assists Muslims to review their past history, and makes them understand both their former state and their present stage which they enjoy, so that they may catch well the concept of the lesson taught through the previous holy verses.

This verse implies that they should remember the time that they were few in number and could do nothing. They were captured in the grips of their enemies who had drawn them into weakness and incapability. It says:

"And remember when you were few, deemed weak in the land..."

They were in a state that they feared that both pagans and those who were their opponents might despoil them away. The verse says:

"...and were fearful that people would snatch you away..."

This meaning makes manifest the utmost weakness and fewness of the members of Muslims in front of pagans in Mecca before migration of the Prophet (S) to Medina, or after migration in front of the great powers of that time, like the forces of Iran and Rom.

Then, the verse continues saying:

"...but He gave you refuge **(*in Medina*)*..."***

Then it adds:

"...and strengthened you with His help..."
"...and provided you with the good things **(*of sustenance*)*..."***
"...in order that you might be thankful."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 27

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمَانَاتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

27. ***"O you who have Faith! Do not betray Allah and the Messenger, and do not betray your trusts knowingly."***

Occasion of Revelation

In the commentary books recorded by both great sects of Islam upon the occasion of revelation of this verse, it has been cited as follows:

When the Jewish tribe named Bani-Qurayzah were surrounded by the Muslim strivers under the command of the Prophet (S) the Jews suggested peace and started moving toward Syria.

But the Prophet (S) did not accept it, and he ordered Sa'd-ibn-Ma'ath to judge over their circumstance. The Jews consulted with 'Abul-Babah, one of the Muslims who had had the background of friendship with them, about that judgment.

When, 'Abul-Babah, by pointing to his throat, signed them that they would be killed totally if they accepted the arbitration of Sa'd-ibn-Ma'ath, Gabriel informed this signal to the Prophet (S). 'Abul-Babah, who was ashamed of this treachery, roped himself to the pillar of the mosque and avoided eating anything for seven days and nights.

Finally, Allah accepted his repentance.[7]

There has also been cited another occasion of revelation upon this verse as follows in the Battle of Badr, one of the Muslims wrote a letter to Abu-Sufyan and informed him of the Prophet's plan Then, Abu-Sufyan asked for help from the pagans of Mecca, and they sent one thousand fighters to fight in the Battle of Badr.[8]

Now Allah commands the believers not to approach treachery. The holy verse, addressing the believing people, implies that they should not betray Allah (s.w.t) by means of abandoning His ordinances and His Messenger (S) by leaving his rules, because whoever leaves or spoils anything of the religion, he has betrayed Allah (s.w.t) and His Messenger (S). The verse says

"O you who have Faith! Do not betray Allah and the Messenger..."

Also, the believers should not be treacherous to the affairs upon which Allah has trusted them, and has given them the fulfillment of them that they accomplish them without any deficiency Thus, he who is treacherous to Allah and the Messenger of Islam (S), has been treacherous to his own deposits.

And you know that treachery is an ugly action which incurs punishment.

The verse says:

“…and do not betray your trusts knowingly.”

Therefore, treachery is basically ugly and condemned, especially those treacheries which are performed knowingly, and the manifestation of military secrets are uglier and more dangerous, for which, and of course the sinful person must repent very soon.

However, the spoils of war, alms, Khoms (one fifth levy), and all properties of others, which are with you, are deposits. Similarly, other bounties, such as: the school of religion, leadership, the Qur’an, children, and territorial of the country are the deposits of Allah.

And according to the tradition which Shawahid-ut-Tanzil, by Hakim Huskani, vol. 1, p. 205 has narrated from Ihqaq-ul-Haqq, vol. 14, p. 564 the progeny of the Prophet (S) are also the Divine deposits.

By obeying them and following them, we must protect these deposits.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 28

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

28. ***“And know that your wealth and your children are a (means of) trial, and that Allah - with Him is a great reward.”***

Intensive love for wealth and children is the pivot of a lot of evil actions. It is the origin of many unlawful transactions, lies, monopolies, short weights, lack of payment of the alms- tax, to avoid giving Khoms (one fifth levy) and poor-rates, greeds, hindering others’ affairs, false oaths, wasting the people’s rights, and the like of them.

The love of children may cause a person to escape from the battle-field and not to tolerate a short separation from the family.

Then, these are the factors of trial, as explained in the previous verse. This kind of love drew ‘Abul-Babah into committing wrong and, in order to protect his wealth and children, he assisted the enemy of Islam.

Therefore, regarding the occasion of revelation of the previous verse, excessive love to wealth and children causes man to fall into sin and treachery. The verse under discussion says:

“And know that your wealth and your children are a (means of) trial…”

Also, wealth and children can be two fascinating traps on the way of human beings to which the Qur'an has repeatedly warned in different ways. For example, Surah Al-Munafiqun, No. 63, verse 9 says:

"...let not your wealth, or your children, divert you from the remembrance of Allah..."

Being attentive to the great reward of Allah causes us to leave the love of the world and also to abandon treachery. The verse says:

"...and that Allah - with Him is a great reward."

1. Recorded in Tafsir-i-Furqan, by Manaqib Tarmathy
2. This meaning is recorded in Tafsir-i-Furqan, narrated from Imam Sadiq (as)
3. Al-Mizan.
4. Furqan, narrated from Shawahid- ut- Tanzil, by Huskani, vol. 1, p. 206.
5. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, saying No. 1, p. 530, English version.
6. Majma'-ul-Bayan, vol. 4, p. 534 (Arabic version) and Tafsir-ul-Burhan
7. Majma'-ul-Bayan, and Tafsir-us-Safi
8. Al-Mizan, and Majma'-ul-Bayan

Section 4: The Guardianship of the Sacred Mosque

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 29

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

29. ***"O you who have Faith! If you be in awe of Allah, He will assign for you a discrimination (between right and wrong), and absolve you of your misdeeds, and forgive you, and Allah is the Lord of Mighty Grace."***

The current criterions of recognizing right from wrong are numerous. Among them are the followings:

A) Prophets and saints of Allah are criterions. An Islamic tradition says:

"He who leaves Ali (as) has really left Allah."[1]

B) The Book of Allah is a criterion. By adapting things with the Qur'an, the right can be recognized from wrong.

C) Piety is another criterion. When the storm of instincts, accompanied with love and enmity that are nourished from impiety, arrives, piety is dismissed and impiety hinders the recognition of facts:

The ability of the recognition between right and wrong is a knowledge given by Allah, and it does not merely depend on the ability of reading and writing or necessarily on the standard of knowledge.

The verse says:

"O you who have Faith! If you be in awe of Allah He will assign for you a discrimination (between right and wrong), and absolve you of your misdeeds, and forgive you, and Allah is the Lord of Mighty Grace."

Fakhr-i-Razi has explained: "The expiation of sins is concealment in this world, while 'forgiveness' is a deliverance from the punishment of Allah in Hereafter. According to the statements of some other commentators of the Qur'an 'expiation' is to wipe out the social and psychological effects of sins, while forgiveness is a remittance in respect to Hell."

Therefore, those who put aside the mental desires will recognize the truth, and their piety causes a proper insight to come forth in them and a great virtue and reward to be obtained.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 30

وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ ۚ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ

30. ***"And (remember) when those who-disbelieved plotted against you to take you captive, or to kill you, or to expel you. They devised and Allah devised, and Allah is the best devisers.***

Occasion of Revelation

This verse is a hint to /laylat-ul-mabit/ (the night when Ali (as) laid himself in couch of the Prophet (S) and a reference unto the heathens' plot for killing the Messenger of Allah (S).

The Prophet (S) was informed of that plot by means of the Messenger Angel Gabriel, and then Ali- ibn-Abi- Talib (as) laid himself in the couch of the Holy prophet (S) under his mantle-piece. So, the Holy Prophet (S) went out of his house by the same night and took shelter in the cave of Thur, from where he migrated to Medina.

There were three plots, mentioned in the verse under discussion, by either of them infidels wanted to work against the Prophet (S). Those plots were designed in the meeting that the elders of pagans held in Dar-un-Nudwah, where they finally approved the second plan.

By that plan they decided that a young man from each of the tribes be chosen and they would be

prepared so that all of them together could attack to kill him, in order that the charge of the murder might be laid equally on each tribe and the relatives of the Prophet (S) might not be able to fight against all those tribes together and thus there would be left to them no other choice but to receive his blood-money.

The Arabic word /makr/ means: 'deceit and trick'. 'Azhari, a commentator, says: "People's deceit is recompensed by Allah's deceit and trickery."

There is a difference between the Arabic term s /qadr/ (treachery) and /makr/ (deceit). The meaning of the former is accompanied with breach of promise, while the meaning of the later is deceit in general.

The verse addresses the Prophet (S) to remember when pagans began devising and consulting with each other how to defeat him and to kill him. The verse says:

"And (remember) when those who disbelieved plotted against you to take you captive, or to kill you, or to expel you..."

They devised about him and Allah devised about them, too.

That is, some of them plotted so that he (S) could not understand, and Allah devised against them in a way that they did not know, and punished them. The verse says:

"...They devised and Allah devised..."

Allah is the best devisers, because He pays to nothing but what is true and right. This meaning lies in this fact that: He sends down the punishment upon those who deserve it. The verse ends as follows:

"...and Allah is the best devisers."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 31

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا قَالُوا قَدْ سَمِعْنَا لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ هَٰذَا ۙ إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

31*. "And when Our signs are recited to them, they say: 'We have heard. If we like, we (too) can say the like of this (Qur'an). This is naught but the tales of the ancients'."*

In the previous verse, the words were about the plot of the enemies of the Prophet (S) who wanted to kill him. Here, this holy verse refers to their decision that they decided to belittle the religion of Islam and the Qur'an. The verse says:

"And when Our signs are recited to them, they say: 'We have heard..."

The Arabic word /'asatir/ is the plural form of the Qur'anic term /'usturah/ with the sense of 'myths', and

‘imaginary superstitious tales’.

Before the appointment of the Prophet (S) to his Divine mission, Nasr-ibn-i-Harith once had come to Iran and had learnt the Iranian story of Rustam and Isfandiyar. When he returned back to Mecca and Medina, he said to the people of his own locality that he could also speak like Muhammad (S) and tell stories.2

Among the common weapons of enemies, of course, are demagogy, belittling, and disparaging. The verse continues saying:

“...If we like, we (too) can say the like of this (Qur'an)...”

This fact must also be known that enemies of Islam are usually some haughty persons. They claim, but in action, they are incapable to bring the like of the Qur’an. They said that those verses had not any important content in them and they were the myths of the ancient people. The verse says:

“...This is naught but the tales of the ancients’.”

They said such a statement while they had repeatedly tried to challenge with the Qur’an, but they failed every time. So, they knew well that they could not oppose against the Qur’an or challenge with it.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 32

وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَٰذَا هُوَ الْحَقَّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوِ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

32. ***“And (remember) when they said: ‘O Allah! if this (Quran) is the truth from You, then rain down upon us stones from the sky, or bring us a painful punishment’.”***

Such prayers of curses were either because of intense zeal and obstinacy that they considered their own way as a right way and the way of Islam wrong, or it was a kind of demagogy. They cursed themselves in order that some simple- hearted people might feel that Islam was wrong.

When the Prophet (S) under the command of Allah in Ghadir Khumm, appointed Ali (as) for Imamate, Nu'man- ibn-Harith, one of the hypocrites, came to the Prophet (S) and said:

“You ordered us to Unity, prophethood, Holy Struggle, Hajj, fasting, prayer and alms giving, and we accepted them all. Now have you appointed this lad as Imam over us?”

The Prophet (S) said:

“*It was the command of Allah.*”

Then Nu'man, the hypocrite, cursed- himself, and in his curse he imitated this very verse.3

Therefore, an enemy may also expose himself to a curse in order to show himself true. The verse says:

"And (remember) when they said: "O Allah! if this (Qur'an) is the truth from You, then rain down upon us stones from the sky, or bring us a painful punishment'."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 33

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنْتَ فِيهِمْ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

33. ***"But Allah is not to punish them while you are among them, nor is Allah to chastise them while they seek forgiveness."***

The purpose of negation of punishment is removing the general punishment from Muslims because of the existence of the Prophet (S) among them, as former nations were punished; else, in some particular cases, some persons may encounter the Divine punishments.

Some Islamic traditions denote that because of the existence of some purified persons and godly scholars or for the sake of those who seek forgiveness and really repent, Allah (s.w.t) removes His punishment from people among whom they live. The verse says:

"But Allah is not to punish them while you are among them, nor is Allah to chastise them while they seek forgiveness."

In this regard, the existence of the Prophet (S) is a safety for the population of the earth: ***"...while you are among them...";*** and, also, seeking forgiveness hinders calamities, as the above mentioned verse says:

"...while they seek forgiveness."

It is cited in Nahjul-Balagha that after the departure of the Prophet (S) Hazrat Ali (as) said:

"There were two sources of deliverance from Allah's punishment, one of which has been raised up, while the other is before you. You should therefore adhere to it..." (which is seeking forgiveness).[4]

In the supplication of Kumayl, there is a clause that points to the sins which cause afflictions to come down. It is recited as follows:

"O Allah! forgive me the sins which bring about tribulation."

Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 117 says:

"And it did not beseen your Lord to have destroyed the towns tyrannously, while their people acted well."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 34

وَمَا لَهُمْ أَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُوا أَوْلِيَاءَهُ ۚ إِنْ أَوْلِيَاؤُهُ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقُونَ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

34. *"And what (plea) have they that Allah should not chastise them, while they bar (people) from the Holy Mosque, and they are not guardians of it? Its guardians are not but only the pious ones, but most of them do not know."*

The previous verse indicated that because of the existence of the Prophet (S) among his community and for the sake of their seeking forgiveness, Allah removed from them a punishnent like the punishment of the people of 'Ad and Thamud.

This verse refers to their punishment. The purpose of this punishment may be tile worldly punishment and fighting on the earth. It can also be said that they deserve divine punishment, but Allah does not punish them for the sake of the Prophet (S). Or it may mean that they will not be punished in tile present world, but they will be punished in the coming world.

However, those who hinder people to arrive into the Holy Mosque should expect the Divine punishment. The holy verse says:

"And what (plea) have they that Allah should not chastise them, while they bar (people) from the Holy Mosque, and they are not guardians of it?..."

They should also know that the custodianship of the Sacred House, which had been built by Abraham the Friend of Allah (as) and based upon piety, must not be left under the control of some impious persons. The verse continues saying:

"...Its guardians are not but only the pious ones, but most of them do not know."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 35

وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ إِلَّا مُكَاءً وَتَصْدِيَةً ۚ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ

35. *"And their prayer at the (Sacred) House is naught but whistling and clapping. Therefore taste the punishment for what you used to disbelieve."*

The Arabic term /muka'/ means 'to whistle', and the Qur'anic word /tasdiyah/ means 'to clap'.

Their whistling might be for announcing their presence to the idols which were settled in Ka'bah.

In the length of the history of human beings, the religious ceremonies have been being distorted, so that sometimes the most sacred centers have become the pivot of the greatest superstitions.

The verse says:

"And their prayer at the (Sacred) House is naught but whistling and clapping..."

By the way, changing the recitation of Salawat into claps and whistles in the meetings of today is a sign for changing prayers into their clapping and whistling, which causes the descent of calamities and punishments. The denotation expansion of punishment in this verse is the defeat of pagans in the Battle of Badr.

In Islamic literature, it is recorded that during the time when the Prophet (S) was busy praying frequently, two men from the tribe of Bani- 'Abd-ud-Dar came and stood at his right side to whistle and two men stood at his left side to clap.

They did so in order to hinder him to establish his prayer easily. Later, the Prophet (S) killed all of them in the Battle of Badr. Now, this verse, addressing them and other members of Bani- 'Abd-ud-Dar, says:

"...Therefore taste the punishment for what you used to disbelieve."

That is, as the retribution of their disbelief, they should taste the punishment of the sword of the Battle of Badr and the punishment of the Hereafter, too.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 36

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَسَيُنْفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ

36. *"Verily those who disbelieve spend their wealth in order that they hinder (men) from the way of Allah, and still they will spend it, (too), then it will be to them a cause of regret, then they will be overcome, and those who disbelieve will be mustered unto Hell."*

It has been said that this verse was revealed upon the heavy treasury that the pagan of Mecca spent for the Battle of Badr. But the general meaning of the verse includes all the treasuries which may be spent on opposition against Islam.

Disbelievers spend properties in charity for their evil aims, why do Muslims not spend for their sacred aims?

So, in this holy verse, it says that those who spend their wealth on the way of fighting against the Prophet (S) in order that they hinder people from the way and religion of Allah, will be regretful soon and

they will understand that they will not be benefited from that, but it will be the cause of their misfortune.

The verse says:

“Verily those who disbelieve spend their wealth in order that they hinder** (**men**) **from the way of Allah, and still they will spend it,** (**too**)**, then it will be to them a cause of regret, then they will be overcome…”

Thus, those who disbelieve, after being involved with regret as a result of their failure in this world, will also be sent into Hell in Hereafter. The verse says:

“…and those who disbelieve will be mustered unto Hell.”

Why the phrase: ***“those who disbelieve”*** is repeated twice in this verse is for the reason that some of the disbelievers, who spent their wealth for the opposition of Islam, embraced Islam later, therefore the punishment of the Hereafter belongs to those persons who died before becoming Muslims.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 37

لِيَمِيزَ اللَّهُ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ الْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمَهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَجْعَلَهُ فِي جَهَنَّمَ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

37*. “So that Allah may separate the corrupt from the good and place corrupt one another, and pile them up all together, and put them in Hell; those are the losers.”*

The Arabic term, /yarkumah/ means: ‘to accumulate and to pile up together.’ From among the results of oppositions, molestations and the fights between right and wrong is that spiritualities, motives, revenues, promises, and plots are usually made manifest, and the essence or substance of man will be shown.

To make separate the supporters of the right from wrong is one of Allah's ways of treatment, the verse says:

“So that Allah may separate the corrupt from the good and place corrupt one another…”

On Resurrection Day, Allah will gather the corrupt persons with together and send them wholly into Hell. The verse says:

“…and pile them up all together, and put them in Hell; those are the losers.”

As some Islamic literature indicates, accumulation, pressure, and tightness of place are from the specialties of the people of Hell. These impious people are in narrowness there, though Hell is very vast and it repeatedly asks for more and more wrong-doers. It is like a large wall where there are many

points of place for a great deal of nails, but every nail is in pressure.

1. The index of Ihqaqul-Haqq, vol. 4, p.26.
2. Cited in some commentary books such as: the one compiled by 'Alusi, Majma'-ul-Bayan, and Fi-Zilal-il-Qur'an.
3. Al-Ghadir, vol. 1, pp. 239-266, narrated from 30 scholars of the Sunnites.
4. Nahjul Balagha, saying 88

Section 5: The Battle of Badr a Proof of the Messenger's Truthfulness

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 38

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ يَنْتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِنْ يَعُودُوا فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

38. ***"Tell those who disbelieve, if they desist*** **(*from corruptions*)** ***what has past will be forgiven for them, but if they return*** **(*thereto*),** ***then what happened to the ancients has already passed."***

In this verse, the Prophet (S) is commanded to tell the pagans if they repent and really leave corruptions, their former sins will be forgiven. The verse says:

"Tell those who disbelieve, if they desist **(*from corruptions*)** ***what has past will be forgiven for them,..."***

And if they return to war again and persist on infidelity, Allah's way of treatment unto the former nations has been this that He has always helped the believers and has made the enemies of the religion confronted with disgrace and misfortune.

The verse says:

"...but if they return **(*thereto*),** ***then what happened to the ancients has already passed."***

When the holy verse says: /sunnat-ul-'awwalin/ and refers 'Allah's way of treatment' to the ancient, it is for the reason that 'Allah's way of treatment' had always been executed upon them. In another occurrence, the Qur'an says:

"*(This is Our)** ***course with regard to those of Our Messengers whom We sent before you..." **(*Surah Al-'Isra' No. 17, verse 77*).**

Here, He attributes the way of treatment to His messengers, because Allah's way of treatment had been executed by them.

Therefore, in the same verse, He continues saying:

"...and I you shall not find a change in Our course."

Here, He attributes the way of treatment (course) to His Pure Essence, again, because, in fact, the real executor of 'the way of treatment' is Allah Himself.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 39

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

39. ***"And fight with them until there be no mischief and the religion be wholly for Allah. But if they desist, then verily Allah sees what they do."***

The content meaning of this verse addresses the Prophet (S) and the Muslim believers. It commands that they should fight against pagans and root out the sedition of polytheism.

The objective meaning is that the fight against those pagans, who have not given covenant, should be continued until there will remain none of them. The reason of it is that a pagan, who has not covenant, may penetrate inside his tribe and try to invite them to his own creed and, thereby, he can create temptation in the religion of Allah. The verse says:

"...And fight with them until there be no mischief..."

In that case, both the people of right and the people of wrong will wholly him and attend in the religion of Truth and will have correct beliefs. In other words, as a result of assembling people in the true religion, the whole religion will be of Allah. The verse says:

"...and the religion be wholly for Allah..."

Zurarah, as well as some other commentators, has narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) who said:

"The interpretation of this verse has not come forth yet. When our Gha'im raises, those who will be alive on the earth will see its interpretation and the religion of Muhammad (p.h.u.h.) will cover throughout the world. Then there will remain no polytheist therein."[1]

And Allah says:

"They shall serve Me, not associating aught with Me..." (***Surah An- Nur, No. 24, verse 55***).

In Islam, the aim of wars is not occupying lands and countries, but their aim is the expansion of the religion of Islam and opposing with mischief.

The Qur'anic term /fitnah/ (sedition) has a vast meaning. It includes any imposition of pressure, too. This word has also been used in the Qur'an with the meaning of 'polytheism'.

It is, maybe, for the fact that kinds of limitations and impositions of pressures are fulfilled over the minds, societies and truth- seekers from the side of polytheists. Or, since polytheism causes the eternal punishment to be incurred, imposing infidelity on believers and pure-nature humans is counted mischief, too.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 40

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۚ نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

40. ***"And if they turn away, then know that Allah is your guardian - an excellent Guardian, and an excellent Helper!"***

You should know that Allah is your guardian even if they turn away. He is a very good Guardian and an excellent helper, and He assists the believers along the way of obedience, and He does not leave His friends to them.

The verse says:

"And if they turn away, then know that Allah is your guardian - an excellent Guardian, and an excellent Helper!"

The End of Part Nine

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 41

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ
بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

41. ***"And know that whatever thing you gain*** (***of booties***)***, a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Messenger and for the near relatives*** (***Ahlul-Bayt***) ***and the orphans, and the needy and the way-farer, if you believe in Allah and what We sent down to Our servant on the day of distinction*** (***of right from wrong***)***, the day when the two hosts encountered*** (***the day of Battle of Badr***)***, and surely Allah is All-powerful over everything."***

According to some Islamic traditions that the Shi'ite believe, the meaning of the term /qanimat/ (booty) is not confined to the war spoils, but, besides that, it encompasses my kind of gain which is obtained from mains, diving, trade, and so on. Thus, the revelation of the verse concerning the battle of Badr is not evidence that its purpose is only 'war spoils'.

Through the first verse of this Surah, the Qur'an allocated all 'Anfal (the things gained) to Allah and the Messenger, while this verse says that ***'a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Messenger (Ahlul-Bayt)'.***

If the objective meaning of the term /qanimat/ (booty) is only 'the spoils of war', it must be said that this verse refers to only one instance of Khums (one fifth) and other instances are discussed in some Islamic traditions.

As many traditions of the Shi'ite and also some traditions of the Sunnite indicate, the meaning of the Qur'anic term /oil qurba/ (near relatives) does not envelop all the relatives of the Prophet (S) but its purpose is the immaculate Imams (as) from Ahl-ul-Bayt who possess the rank of leadership.

So, the amount of Khoms (one fifth levy) belongs to the divine leader and the Islamic government, not to all the relatives of the Prophet (S).

Other usages of Khoms (one fifth levy) are for indigents, way-farers who are progenies of Bani-Hashim -since it is unlawful to give them alms, and their needs should be provided through Khoms.

Besides the Islamic traditions which consider the meaning of /oil qurba/ (near relatives) the immaculate Imams (as), the occurrence of the word recited in the same row. With Allah and the Messenger in the verse is a sign which implies /oil qurba/ are some persons who are along the way of Allah (s.w.t) and the Messenger of Allah (S).

Explanations

1- Now that, by the help of Allah, you are victorious in the Battle of Badr, do not evade paying Khoms (one fifth) of booties.

"And know that whatever thing you gain (of booties), a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Messenger and for the near relatives (Ahlul-Bayt) and the orphans, and the needy and the way-farer, if you believe in Allah..."

2- 'Khoms' (a fifth of the gains) is for the sake of Messengership and the rank of government, not for a person.

3- Government and the leader need budget for propagation and messengership.

(***...for Allah and for the Messenger...***)

4– Khoms is obligatory, though the income and gains are scanty.

"...whatever thing you gain (of booties)..."

5– The deprive and the government are the owners of twenty percent of people's property.

"...a fifth of it is for Allah..."

6– Allah does not need to have a share. The remembrance of Allah's share is for the sovereignty of the mastership of the line of Allah (s.w.t) and the Messenger (S).

7– The share of Allah is spent for elevating the word of Allah, the Ka' bah, Islamic religious propagations, and the establishment of the Divine Law.

8– Among the Islamic duties is to wipe out deprivation from the Islamic society. Therefore, the income gained from the holy Struggle and the spoils of war should be spent for the benefit of the poor.

9– Allah's share is at the disposal of the Messenger (S), and the Messenger's share is at the disposal of Imam.[2]

10– It is Imam who can decide upon the quantity of the share how to be used for the instances mentioned in the verse.[3]

11– In order to honour the deprive, their name has been settled in the verse beside the name of Allah and the Messenger.

12– In the same manner that the vast meaning of the Arabic term /qaramat / (indemnity) includes any damage, not merely a damage of war, the meaning of the Qur'anic term /qanimat/ (spoils), which is referred to in this verse, also includes any gain, not merely a gain of war.[4]

13– The sign of a complete belief is a full submission before all Divine Laws totally, not only in worships and even in war.

14– The day of war is the day of distinction of the truthful ones from the people of lying.

"...on the day of distinction..."

15– In the Battle of Badr, the help of Allah made manifest the rightfulness of Islam.

Then, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an has pointed to the infinite power of Allah, Omnipotence, when it says:

"...and surely Allah is All-powerful over everything."

That is, though you were in minority from any point of view in the field of the Battle of Badr and,

apparently, your enemy was in majority from any point of view, Allah, the Mighty, defeated them and helped you to be victorious.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 42

إِذْ أَنْتُمْ بِالْعُدْوَةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ بِالْعُدْوَةِ الْقُصْوَىٰ وَالرَّكْبُ أَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ تَوَاعَدْتُمْ لَاخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِي الْمِيعَادِ ۙ وَلَٰكِنْ لِيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا لِيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ وَيَحْيَىٰ مَنْ حَيَّ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَسَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

42. *"(Remember) when you were on the down side, and they were on the up side, while the caravan (of the enemy) was in below you; and had you agreed together on a tryst, you would have surely failed the tryst, but in order that Allah might bring about a matter which was to be done, that he who perishes may perish by a clear proof, and verily Allah is All; Hearing, All-knowing."*

The Qur'anic term /'udwah/ is derived from /'aduw/ with the meaning of 'to transgress'. It is also used for the edge and surroundings of anything that has gone beyond the medium. In this verse, the objective meaning of the term /'udwah/ is 'the side and lower extremities'.

The Arabic word /dunya/ is derived from /dunuww/ in the sense of 'down side and nearer', while the Arabic word /quswa / means 'farther'.

In the Battle of Badr, the enemies not only had superiority from the points of arms, number of fighters, and preparation, but also they were preferable from the point of the site of settlement of their forces, because they could find a way at the bank of the Red Sea to escape.

But Allah caused the Muslims to encounter the pagans with the aim of confiscation of their properties, where they had no way but to fight. Yet, it was only the grace of Allah which brought triumph of that Battle for the Muslims.

A Review over the Battle of Badr

The illustration of the feature of the Battle of Badr by reviewing Surah Al-'Anfal from the beginning can show Allah's helps better.

1- They thought of confiscation of pagans' properties, but they were not ready for war:

"...and loved that the one unarmed should be yours..." (verse No. 7).

2- When the war began, they were worried:

"...a party of the believers was certainly averse (to it)," (verse No. 5).

3- They were afraid of death:

***"...as if they were being driven unto death..."* (*verse No. 6*).**

4- They were disabled and were seeking their Lord for help:

***"...when you were calling upon your Lord for succor..."* (*verse No. 9*).**

5- By the night of attack, Satan imposed them his uncleanness (jenabat) (major ritual impurity):

***"...The uncleanness of Satan..."* (*verse No. 11*).**

6- They did not have complete obedience from the commander:

***"...Those who say: 'We heard,' but they do not hear (indeed)"* (*verse No. 21*).**

7- They were small in number and they were fearful to be hunted by the enemy:

***"...you were few,...and were fearful that people would snatch you away..."* (*verse No. 26*).**

8- Some of them had formerly committed treachery,5

9- Their leader was threatened and plotted against by disbelievers:

***"...Those who disbelieved plotted against you..."* (*verse No. 30*)**

10- They were thirsty, and they fell in major ritual impurity while the sand under their feet was soft and Allah sent down water for them.

11- If the affairs were at their disposal, with those many difficulties they had, they would never come to agreement:

***"...and had you agreed together one tryst, you would have surely failed the tryst..."* (*verse under discussion*).**

12- Wherever Allah pleases, He removes all the factors of weakness:

***"... but in order that Allah might bring about a matter which was to be done..."* (*verse under discussion*).**

13- Having all these helps, whoever does not believe will knowingly be destroyed, and whoever believes will knowingly believe:

"...that he who perishes may perish by a clear proof and he who lives may live by a clear proof..."

14- Do not judge hurriedly. They did not like to fight, but, later, they found out its goodness.

15- Allah may change the ways and decisions, and, by this very way, Allah can be known.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 43

إِذْ يُرِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَنَامِكَ قَلِيلًا ۖ وَلَوْ أَرَاكَهُمْ كَثِيرًا لَفَشِلْتُمْ وَلَتَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ سَلَّمَ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ

43. *“(**Remember**) **when Allah showed them to you as few in your dream and had He shown them as many, you would have become disheartened and disputed about the matter; but Allah did save** (**you**). **Surely He is aware of what is in the breasts.”***

Following the explanation of some Allah's graces and His helps unto the Muslims, this verse speaks about the number of pagans which was shown few in the eyes of the Muslims. This was done in a few stages.

The first stage was that the Prophet (S) saw them as few in his dream, and, saying that to the Muslims, promoted their courage. The second stage was that He showed the number of the Muslims in the eyes of pagans so few that they would not call for further fresh forces from Mecca to help them.

It is principally true that prophets’ dream is a glow of revelation, but that the Prophet of Islam (S) saw the large crowd of the pagans so few in his dream was an indication to the reality of the inward state of the pagans, which was fear, weakness and incapability. Surah Al-Hashr, No. 59, verse 14 in this regard says:

“…you may think them united, but their hearts are disunited.”

However, dream is one of the ways of communication, seeking help, and taking courage through Allah's succor. It should also be noted that, in the most terrible conditions, Allah may protect believers and crush their enemies.

The verse says:

*“(**Remember**) **when Allah showed them to you as few in your dream and had He shown them as many, you would have become disheartened and disputed about the matter; but Allah did save** (**you**). **Surely He is aware of what is in the breasts.”***

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 44

وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ إِذِ الْتَقَيْتُمْ فِي أَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيلًا وَيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِي أَعْيُنِهِمْ لِيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا ۗ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ

44. “And (remember) when He showed them to you, when you encountered (the enemy), as few in your eyes, and He made you few in their eyes in order that Allah may enact the matter which was destined to be done, and unto Allah all matters are returned.”

When infidels saw the crowd of the Muslims, they appeared in their eyes so few that they said they would send their slaves to destroy the Muslims.6 But when the war began and they were fighting, they saw the number of those Muslims two fold and they were afraid of them.7

Surah’ Al-i-‘Imran, No. 3, verse 13 says:

“...they (infidels) saw twice as many as they were with the sight of the eye...”

Therefore, in order to help Muslims, Allah may utilize genetic authority and interference in the sights. The verse says:

“And (remember) when He showed them to you, when you encountered (the enemy), as few in your eyes...”

So, if the Will of Allah lies in an affair, He will remove all barriers. The verse continues saying:

“...and He made you few in their eyes in order that Allah may enact the matter which was destined to be done, and unto Allah all matters are returned.”

1. Tafsir-ul-Burhan, p. 82, and Tafsir-us-Safi, p. 303
2. Tafsir-us-Safi.
3. Based upon the tradition of Imam Rida (as) recorded in Tafsir-us-Safi.
4. In the books of Lisan-ul-‘Arab, Taj-ul-‘Aroos, Ghamus, At-Tafsir-ul-Qurtubi, Fakhr-i- Razi, and ‘Alui, there is not found any doubt in the generality of the meaning of the word. In the Quran itself, the word /qammat / has also been applied for the gains other than that of war. For example, Surah An-Nisa, No.4, verse 94 says:

   “...but with Allah are abundant spoils...”.

   However, every one of these two words, /qaramat, qanimat/, has occurred six times in the Qur'an.

5. The event of ‘Abul-Babah, described in verse No. 27.
6. Tafsir-us-Safi
7. Ibid

Section 6: Steadfastness and Unity Enjoined

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 45

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُوا وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

45. ***"O you who have Faith! when you encounter a host (in battle), then stand firm, and remember Allah much, that you may be prosperous."***

Now that Allah (s.w.t,) has commanded the Muslims to be steadfast in the battlefield, He says:

"O you who have Faith! when you encounter a host (in battle), then stand firm..."

That is, whenever you face with a group of infidels in war, stand firm for fighting against them, and do not escape. And, it is evident that believers generally do not fight save against hostile infidels.

Then the holy verse implies that, at the time of war, Muslims should seek help from Allah, the Mighty, so that not only they become victorious and successful in the present world but also they become prosperous in the coming world. The verse continues saying:

"...and remember Allah much, that you may be prosperous."

Some commentators say that this part of the verse means that you should remember the promises of Allah, which He has given you about triumph, in order that your steadfastness might he increased.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 46

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ ۖ وَاصْبِرُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

46. ***"And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute, for you will become disheartened and your power will depart; and be patient, verily Allah is with the patient."***

Believers should obey Allah and His Messenger, and when they encounter their enemy, they should be united and avoid disputing. Otherwise, they may fear and lose their hearts, and begin fighting while their courage and power vanish.

The verse says:

"And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute, for you will become disheartened and your power will depart..."

Some commentators have said that they may lose victory and government as a result of it.

The Arabic term /rih/, mentioned here, is a hint to progression, influence, and reaching the aim.

Some other commentators have said that if Muslims show discord with each other, they will not find the breeze of triumph upon their lives.

Thus, they should be patient in the war against the enemy, since Allah is with the patient ones. The verse says:

"...and be patient, verily Allah is with the patient."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 47

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بَطَرًا وَرِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

47. ***"And do not be like those who got out from their homes boastfully and to show off to men and barring from Allah's way, and verily Allah encompasses what they do."***

The verse addresses the believers, telling them not to be like the Quraysh who made up a group of mischievous drunkard persons to go out in order to protect their caravan. Intending ostentation and prohibiting others from the religion of Allah, i.e. Islam, they started from Mecca toward the land of Badr.

Their hypocritical act was that they wanted to pretend that they did not count Muslims so considerable and important that they would be fearful of them. But they should know that Allah is aware of their deeds and none of their acts is concealed to Him, the One Who gives them the retribution of their hypocritical deeds.

The verse says:

"And do not be like those who got out from their homes boastfully and to show off to men and barring from Allah's way, and verily Allah encompasses what they do."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 48

وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌ لَكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَتِ الْفِئَتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِنْكُمْ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ ۚ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

48. ***"And (remember) when Satan made their deeds fair seeming to them and said: 'Today none of people shall overcome you, and I will be a protector for you.' But when the two hosts sighted each other, he turned upon his heels, and said: 'Indeed I am quit of you. Verily I see what you do not see. Surely I fear Allah, and Allah is severe in retribution'."***

Here, in this verse, another scene of the Battle of Badr, which happened on the day of war, has been illustrated.

At first, it implies that on that day, Satan made their deeds Seem decorous to them, so that they would think of their actions optimistically and became encouraged by them. The verse says:

“And (remember) when Satan made their deeds fair seeming to them…”

Satan's decoration is such that, by the way of stimulating lusts, desires, and indecent qualities in him, he makes the feature of man's actions so fair seeming to his eyes that he will terribly be attracted to it. Satan tempts them that today they have so many fighters with a lot of arms, so much so that none of people can overcome them, and they are an undefeating army. The verse says:

“…and said: ‘Today none of people shall overcome you…”

Then Satan adds that besides that, he is also their neighbor and so near to them that, at the necessary time, like a faithful sympathetic neighbor, he will withhold no support from them. The verse continues saying:,

“…and I will be a protector for you.'…”

But when the two armies encountered each other and the angels came to help the army of Unity, the infidels observed the power and steadfastness of the Muslims. Then, Satan turned back and shouted at them, saying that he hated them (the infidels). The verse says:

“…But when the two hosts sighted each other, he turned upon his heels, and said:, Indeed I am quit of you…”

Satan brought forth two reasons for his awful turning, back. The first reason was that he said:

“…Verily I see what you do not see…”

By this phrase, Satan meant that he saw the signs of triumph in the features of the believing Muslims, as well as the effects of Allah’s support and angels' helps among them.

Satan added another thing, saying that he was afraid of the painful punishment of Allah in the scene which he saw very near. The verse says:

“…surely I fear Allah…”

Allah's punishment is not such a simple thing that anybody can resist before it, but it is certain that His retribution is sharp and severe. The verse says:

“…and Allah is severe in retribution '.”

Section 7: Enemy Weakened by Allah

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 49

إِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ غَرَّ هَٰؤُلَاءِ دِينُهُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

49*. "*(***Remember***) ***when the hypocrites said, and those in whose hearts were a disease: 'Their religion has deluded them, But whoever puts his trust in Allah, then Allah is indeed the Mighty, the Wise."***

The persons who apparently express that they have believed in Islam but inwardly they hesitate about it are those who carry a disease in their hearts. The verse says:

"(***Remember***) ***when the hypocrites said, and those in whose hearts was a disease:…"***

Some commentators have said that there were several young men from Quraysh in Mecca who embraced Islam, and then, their fathers put them in prison. They were: Qays-ibn- Walid-ibn-Muqayrah, Ali-ibn-'Ummayit-ibn-Khalf, -ibn- Munbih, Harith-ibn-Zam'ah, and Abu-Qays-ibn-Fakihat-ibn-Muqayrah.

As soon as they saw the small number of the Muslims in war, they said that those people were proud of their religion and, disregard the large crowd of pagans there, they had been deceived by the Prophet (S) and they came to fight.

"…'Their religion has deluded them.'…"

Then Allah states the following phrase, meaning that they themselves were deluded. The verse says:

"…But whoever puts his trust in Allah, then Allah is indeed the Mighty, the Wise."

That is, whoever delivers his affairs to Allah (s.w.t) and, trusts in Him while he tries to please Him by his good behaviour, Allah (s.w.t) helps him and prepares the means of victory for him. The reason is that Allah is Mighty and Wise, and the one who refuges to Him will be secured by His mightness and wisdom.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verses 50-51

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۙ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ

50*. “And had you seen when the angles take away the souls of those who disbelieve, smiting their faces and their backs* (*and saying*)*: ‘Taste the punishment of the burning’.*

51*. “This is for what your hands have sent ahead, and that Allah is not unjust unto the servants.”*

The verse indicates that were you to see when the angles take away the infidels, striking their faces and their backs, you would surprise. The objective meaning is the dead bodies of those who were killed in the Battle of Badr. The verse says:

“And had you seen when the angles take away the souls of those who disbelieve, smiting their faces and their backs* (*and saying*)*: ‘Taste the punishment of the burning’.”

It has been said that a man came to the Prophet of Islam (S) and said that he had seen a trace on the back of Abu Jahl which was like the trace of a horseshoe. The Prophet (S) said that it had been the trace of the smiting of the angles.

Mujahid had narrated that once a man told the Prophet (S) that as soon as he decided to smite one of the polytheists, he fell dead The Prophet (S) said that the angels had attacked the pagan before he started.

The angels tell the infidels that after this punishment there is another chastisement waiting them which is more burning and more blazing.

Some commentators have said that, on the day of the Battle of Badr, the angels had some arms made of iron when they struck them on the polytheists, a fire burned their wounds, and the purpose of the phrase ***‘taste the punishment of the burning’*** is this very meaning.

This retribution they are involved with is for the evil manner they showed from themselves in this life.

The reason why the verse says ***‘This is for what your, hands have sent ahead’***, is that most of actions are done by the hands. The purpose here is their crimes, faithlessness, and sins. The verse says

“This is for what your hands have sent ahead, and that Allah is not unjust unto the servants.”

Allah (s.w.t) punishes the servants as much as they are deserving to, not more than that.

However, it is clearly understood from this verse that Allah does not punish anyone without having any sin, or for the sin another person has committed, because it is unjust So, Allah seriously negates cruelty and injustice from Himself, when He, says

“...and that Allah is not unjust unto the servants.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 52

كَدَأْبِ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

52. ***“(O' Prophet! the manner of pagans of your time is also) like the manner of Pharaoh's clan and those before them, they disbelieved in Allah's Signs, so Allah seized them for their sins. Verily Allah is strong, severe in retribution.”***

In this verse and it’s following couple of verses, the Quran points to a constant Divine way of manner about clans and nations.

At first it addresses the Prophet (S) and implies that the style and the state of the pagans of Quraysh are like that of Pharaoh’s clan and the people who were before them. Those people rejected the Signs of Allah, therefore He punished them for their sins. The verse says:

“(O' Prophet! the manner of pagans of your time is also) like the manner of Pharaoh's clan and those before them, they disbelieved in Allah's Signs, so Allah seized them for their sins...”

It is certain that Allah (s.w.t) is Mighty, Omnipotent, and His retribution is severe. The verse says:

“...Verily Allah is strong, severe in retribution.”

Thus, there were not only the Quraysh and polytheists and idolaters of Mecca who rejected the signs of Allah and showed obstinacy before the Truth and disputed with the true leaders of humanity, and then they were involved with the retribution of their sins, but also this is a permanent Divine Law.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 53

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۙ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

53. ***“That is because Allah does not change a blessing He has bestowed on a people unless they change what is in their own selves, and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”***

Then, by mentioning the basic root of the subject, the, Qur'an makes this matter more clear. It implies that all of these are for that Allah does not alter whatever blessing He bestows on a people unless those people themselves alter their own conditions, and, of course Allah is aware of everything. The verse says:

“That is because Allah does not change a blessing He has bestowed on a people unless they change what is in their own selves, and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

In other words, the graces and blessings of Allah (s.w.t) are infinite, common, and general, but they reach people due to their eligibilities, suitability and competencies.

When people utilize the blessings of Allah (s.w.t) as a means for reaching unto their perfection, and show gratitude for them, which is the correct usage of them, Allah makes His blessings fixed and increased.

But, when these blessings are used as a means for disobedience, injustice, mischief, and ingratitude, He may take them back or changes them into some afflictions and calamities.

Thus, alteration of the bounties and blessings always depend on our own selves, else the blessings and merits of Allah are ceaseless.

An Islamic tradition indicates that nothing can change the Divine blessings like what injustice does, since Allah hears the complaints of the oppressed.[1]

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 54

كَدَأْبِ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ وَكُلٌّ كَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ

54. *"Like the manner of Pharaoh's clan and those before them, they denied the Signs of their Lord, so We destroyed them for their sins, and We drowned pharaoh's 'clan, and all of them were unjust."*

Following this aim, the Qur'an refers again to the state of some rich persons like the clan of Pharaoh and some groups of people from among former nations. It implies that the manner and worship of idolaters, concerning the change of blessings and facing with the severe retributions, is like the manner and circumstances of the people of Pharaoh and the people before them. The verse says:

"Like the manner of Pharaoh's clan and those before them..."

They also rejected the Signs of their Lord which were sent down with the aim of their guidance, reinforcement, and felicity

"...they denied the Signs of their Lord...".

Therefore, the Lord destroyed them, too, for their own sins. The verse continues saying:

"...so We destroyed them for their sins..."

And Allah drowned Pharaoh's clan in the waves of the sea. The verse remarks:

“...and We drowned Pharaoh's clan...”

All of those people were unjust and cruel, both to themselves and to others. The verse concludes:

“...and all of them were unjust.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 55

إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

55. ***“Verily the worst of animals in Allah's sight are those who disbelieve, so they will not have faith.”***

In verse No. 22 from the current Surah, the meaning of the Qur'anic phrase /sarr-ad-dawabb/ (the worst of animals) was introduced as ***‘those who do not contemplate’***, while here, in this verse, they are defined as ***‘those who disbelieve’***. The verse says:

“Verily the worst of animals in Allah's sight are those who disbelieve, so they will not have faith.”

So, the origin of infidelity is the absence of right intellect. The Qur’an considers the feature of humanity of man in wisdom and belief, so that if he does not contemplate or paves the way of infidelity, he will be out of the circle of humanity. Thus, a true human, indeed, is the one who is wise and has Faith.

It is possible that a disbeliever has a title and rank with the people of his society, but he is ‘the worst of animals’ in the sight of Allah.

It is cited in some commentary books that the referent of a concept of this verse is the Jews, but this idea does not harm the generality of the concept of the verse.

However, those who hear the call and invitation of prophets, and do not show any positive reflection to it, are ***‘the worst of animals’.***

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 56

الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتَ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ فِي كُلِّ مَرَّةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَتَّقُونَ

56. ***“Those with whom you made a covenant, then they break their covenant every time, and they are not pious.”***

The agreement of the Jews with the Prophet (S) was that they should not help pagans and not try to hurt the Muslims. But those groups of the Jews broke their promise and for the Battle of Khandaq they

helped pagans by selling them arms.

Therefore, breach of promise is not consistent with humanity.

But breach of promise is the style of infidels. Faithfulness and chivalry are necessary to piety. The verse says:

"Those with whom you made a covenant, then they break their covenant every time, and they are not pious."

Some Islamic traditions indicate that he who breaks promise is a hypocrite, although he establishes prayers and observes the fast.[2]

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 57

فَإِمَّا تَثْقَفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْحَرْبِ فَشَرِّدْ بِهِمْ مَنْ خَلْفَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ

57*. "So, when you confront them in war,* (*by punishing them*) *scatter the ones behind them so that they might be admonished."*

The Qur'anic term /ta□qafannahum/ is derived from the Arabic word /□aqifa/ which means 'to understand something quickly and carefully'. Then the word mentioned in the above-mentioned verse means that 'when you encounter infidels in war, you should face them very vigilantly in order not to be seized unawares'.

The Arabic word /tasrid/ means 'to cause insecurity, anxiety' and 'to disperse'. Thus, the phrase means that you should attack the enemy in a manner and with a martial plan that their supporters out of the scene, and the forces behind them, become so terrified that they do not think of invasion and continuation of supporting them anymore.

The verse says:

"So, when you confront them in war,* (*by punishing them*) *scatter the ones behind them so that they might be admonished."

Islam is a religion of kindness and mercy, yet it does not tolerate treachery, breach of promise, and disturbance of the regularity and security. Then, infidels should be punished so violently that they relinquish attacking you again.

1. At- Tafsir-ul-Furqan
2. At- Tafsir-ul-Burhan

Section 8: Muslims Should be Prepared to Meet the Enemy in Any Number

Surah Al-Anfal – Verses 58-59

وَإِمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَانْبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَاءٍ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْخَائِنِينَ

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَبَقُوا ۚ إِنَّهُمْ لَا يُعْجِزُونَ

58. ***"And if you fear treachery from a people, break off*** **(*the covenant*)** ***with them in like manner. Verily Allah does not like the treacherous."***
59. ***"And let not those who disbelieve suppose that they have excelled*** **(*the Muslims*)*: verily they shall not weaken*** **(*you*)*."***

The Qur'anic term /'anbio/is derived from /nabaoa/ which means 'to throw', here it means: 'then throw their covenant back to them'. That is, from before they should announce and cancel the covenant so that they would not be seized unawares and you, too, would not have acted cowardly.

The holy phrase /'ala sawa' /either means 'behaving correspondingly', viz. in the same manner that they think of plotting and breaching promise, you may cancel the covenant, too. Or, it means the clear canceling of the -covenant, or having a just behaviour toward the enemy.[1]

The verse is about the situation where there are some evidences upon the enemy's plot for invasion. So, in order to avoid it, precedence in canceling the covenant should be performed.

The performance of canceling the covenant is just when behaving correspondingly. The verse says:

"And if you fear treachery from a people, break off **(*the covenant*)** ***with them in like manner. Verily Allah does not like the treacherous."***

And take the control of everything so vigorously that infidels do not think that they have preceded you. The verse; says:

"And let not those who disbelieve suppose that they, have excelled **(*the Muslims*)*:..."***

But, infidels cannot gain anything through treachery. The verse continues saying:

"...verily they shall not weaken **(*you*)*."***

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 60

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَآخَرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُهُمْ ۚ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ

60. ***"And prepare against them whatever you can of (military) power and of war-horses, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah, and your enemy, and others besides them, whom you do not know (but) Allah knows them. And whatever things you spend in the way of Allah shall be repaid to you in full, and you will not be dealt with unjustly."***

Increase of War Power and Its Aim!

Adapting to the former instruction upon Islamic Struggle, in this verse the Qur'an points to an important principal which must be observed by Muslims in different ages. This principal is the necessity of enough war preparation against the enemy.

At first, it says:

"And prepare against them whatever you can of (military) power and of war-horses…"

That is, do not wait until the enemy attacks you and then make yourselves prepare to fight. You should be prepared enough from before to stand against the probable attacks of the enemy. The concept of the verse is so vast that it quitely adapts to any time and any place.

If this great Islamic instruction which says: ***"And prepare against them whatever you can of (military) power…"*** is preached as a common motto everywhere and all Muslims apply it in their own lives, whether they are young or old, educated or uneducated, writer, or speaker, soldier or officer, farmer or merchant, it will be enough to make amends their retardation.

Practical life of the Prophet of Allah (S) as well as the great leaders of Islam, also shows that they never neglected any opportunity of fighting against their enemies.

They would not disregard any matter, small and great, about supplying arms and personals, encouraging their soldiers, choosing a suitable camping-place, deciding on a proper time for attacking the enemy, and utilizing all kinds of military methods.

Next to the statement of this instruction, the Qur'an points to the logical and manly aim of this subject. It implies that the aim is not that you mow the nations of the world, and even the people of your own community, by kinds of distinctive arms.

You should not spoil the towns and lands, or take in possession the properties and lands of others, or

expand the principals of slavery and colonialism in the world. But, the aim is that by these means you frighten the enemy of Allah (s.w.t) and those who are the enemy of yours. The verse continues saying:

"...to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah, and your enemy,..."

The reason of it is that usually most of the enemies of the truth do not pay attention to the logical statements and human principals. They do not understand anything but the logic of force.

Then, the Qur'an adds that in addition to these enemies, whom you know, you have some other enemies whom you do not know, but Allah knows them, and with the increase of the military preparation in yourselves they may fear and return back. The verse says:

"...and others besides them, whom you do not know **(*but*)** ***Allah knows them..."***

This statement contains an instruction for the Muslims of today, too. It implies that Muslims should not lay emphasis only on their known enemies and confine their preparation to the limit of struggling before them. They should also consider their probable enemies who are in potency, and prepare the utmost power and necessary forces they can.

Finally, the Qur'an points to another important matter. It implies that preparing power, forces, enough military; instruments and different means of defense need a financial source. Therefore, it commands Muslims to supply this capital through a general cooperation.

They must know that whatever they spend in this way they have spent it in the way of Allah, and it will not be decreased. The verse says:

"...And whatever things you spend in the way of Allah shall be repaid to you in full..."

Equal to all that they give and, even more than that, will be repaid to them so that no injustice will be dealt with them. The verse ends as follows:

"...and you will not be dealt with unjustly."

Explanations

This verse is an instruction upon the Muslims to be prepared before the enemy from all points of view. They are commanded to supply any kind of arms and possibilities, to utilize all means and methods of propagation, even mottoes and poems that may cause the fright of infidels from the military power of Muslims.

When the Prophet (S) was informed that a new weapon had been made in Yemen, he sent someone to Yemen to supply it.

It is narrated from the Prophet (S) that by means of an 'arrow' three persons will be sent into Paradise:

its constructor, the one who prepares it, and the person who, throws (it toward the enemy of Allah).2

In Islam, financial winning and losing in the races of shooting, and horsemanship, have been counted permissible in order that military preparation might be supplied.

It is not such that everywhere logic and discussion are enough and effective, but sometimes enforcement and power should come in the scene, too.

That is why Muslims should always supply the most advanced military possibilities for the defense in such a manner that nothing may be neglected, whether they are of the kinds of political and material power, or the possibilities of propaganda and precautions.

In Islam, all people are soldiers and general mobilization is necessary. It is also necessary to cast terror into the hearts of; the enemies. A tradition indicates that even by tinging the beard do frighten the enemy, so that they do not say the Islamic troop is old.3

However, the war-horses are those horses which are kept ready and fed sufficiently in stables, not those which are left free.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 61

وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

61. "And if they incline to peace, then you (too) incline to it and put your trust in Allah; verily He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing."

This verse discusses about peace with the enemy and it makes this fact more clear. It says:

"And if they incline to peace, then you (too) incline to it..."

And, since, at the time of signing the treaty of peace, men often involve with doubts and hesitations, it commands the Prophet (S) that he does not hesitate in accepting the suggestion of peace when its conditions are logical, wisely, and justly. He is ordered to trust in Allah, because He both hears their debates and is aware of their intentions.

The verse continues saying:

"...and put your trust in Allah; verily He is the All- Hearing, the All-Knowing."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 62

وَإِنْ يُرِيدُوا أَنْ يَخْدَعُوكَ فَإِنَّ حَسْبَكَ اللَّهُ ۚ هُوَ الَّذِي أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ

62. "And if they intend to deceive you, Allah is indeed sufficient for you. It is He Who strengthened you with His help and with (the support of) the believers."

If the leader of Muslims is certain of the enemy's trickery around the peace, the situation changes. But, in the case of the existence of probable of good intention, it should be vigilantly accepted.

Some Islamic traditions indicate that 'the Prophet's support performed by the believers' has been rendered into his support performed by Hadrat Ali (as)

Also Ibn-i- 'Asakir narrates from 'Abu-Hurayrah that, it is written on the 'Arsh:

"There is no good but I, (and) there is no partner for Me. Muhammad (S) is My servant and My Messenger. I supported him by Ali".

This is the same thing that Allah says in this verse.[4]

The verse says:

"And if they intend to deceive you, Allah is indeed sufficient for you. It is He who strengthened you with His help and with (the support of) the believers."

It is understood from this verse that Muslims should accept the suggestion of peace in order that they would not be introduced as 'the seekers of war', but they must be vigilant not to be deceived.

If we do our duties accordingly, we must not be afraid of difficulties, since Allah solves the difficulties.

"...It is He Who strengthened you with His help and with (the support of) the believers."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 63

وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

63. "And He caused affection between their hearts. Had you spent all that is in the earth, you could not have caused affection between their hearts, but Allah caused affection between them; verily He is the Mighty, the Wise."

The verse, addressing the Prophet (S) implies that these sincere believers who have gathered around you, and refrain no sacrifice to offer you, formerly were some scattered people, enemy with each other.

Then Allah showered the light of guidance upon them and created love and affection between them so

intensively that if you spent the whole wealth from over the earth you could not wipe out the grudges of the Age of Ignorance from their hearts.

But, through the way of good device and by Islam, Allah created love and affection between them. The deeds of Allah are all done wisely and for common good.

This very thing is one of the great miracles that the Prophet of Allah (S) was sent to a people that, before Islam, if one of them was given a slap in the face, for its sake the fire of some fights would be lit and so much blood would be shed.

But, through the way of Faith, all those enmities and deeds done contumaciously disappeared and love and understanding substituted them. They became so faithful that they would not refuse killing father, son and brother for the sake of their Faith. Allah announces that He has done this work Himself.

The holy verse says:

"And He caused affection between their hearts. Had you spent all that is in the earth, you could not have caused affection between their hearts, but Allah caused affection between them; verily He is the Mighty, the Wise."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 64

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللَّهُ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

64. ***"O Prophet! Allah suffices you, and the believers who follow you."***

A group of the Jews of Bani-Qurayzah and Bani-Nadir falsely suggested to help the Prophet (S). The above holy verse was revealed saying that the believers were sufficient for him.

In 'Fada'il-us-Sahabah', a book written by Hafiz-'Abu- Na'im, a famous Muslim scholar, it is cited that the objective meaning of 'the believers', mentioned in this verse, is Ali- ibn-Abl-Talib (as)5

Allah, the Prophet (S) and the believers are wholly the basis of the Islamic system. In an Islamic society, the leader is appointed with the Divine criterions. His law is originated from revelation, and people are obedient to the leader and the law.

Obedience accompanied with Faith is a value, while obeying the leader without having Faith, or having Faith without following the leader is useless. The verse says:

"O Prophet! Allah suffices you, and the believers who follow you."

1. Al-Mizan
2. Tafsir-i-Furqan, narrated from Ad-Dur-ul-Manthur.

3. At- Tafsir-ul-Furqan, narrated from Man-la- Yahduruhul-Faqih
4. Tafsir-ul-Furqan, taken from Durr-ul-Manthur, vol. 3, p. 199
5. Al-Qadir, vol. 3, p. 51

Section 9: Muslims Should be Prepared For All Eventualities

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 65

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ ۚ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عِشْرُونَ صَابِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ

65*. “O Prophet! Urge on the believers to fight. If there be of you twenty patient* (***steadfast men***)***, they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a hundred*** (***steadfast ones***)***, they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve, for they are a people who do not understand.”***

This verse negates the equilibrium of forces in figure. It emphasizes on the spirit, Faith and perseverance with patience, so, in order that no one supposes that the triumph of twenty fighters before two hundred ones is an exaggeration, it repeats that one hundred strivers may win one thousand fighters, if they are believers.

In the early battles of Islam, there has never been any statistic equilibrium. In the Battle of Badr, there were three hundred and thirteen believers in front of one thousand infidels. In Uhud, seven hundred Muslims fought against three thousand fighters.

In the Battle of Khandaq, three thousand strivers struggled before ten thousand enemies. In Mutah, there were ten thousand Muslims in front of one hundred thousand pagans.

One of the duties of an Islamic leader is to encourage people to Holy Struggle. The function of the statement of the commander before military activities is very effective.

Therefore, in wars and Holy Struggles, propagation is necessary. The verse says:

“O prophet! Urge on the believers to fight…”

The definite factor in the battlefields of Muslims is Faith and perseverance with patience, not the number of strivers alone.

That was why, at the beginning, under the command of Holy Struggle, the army of Islam, which was one tenth of that of the enemy, won the battle. The verse says:

"...If there be of you twenty patient (steadfast men), they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a hundred (steadfast ones), they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve..."

The soldier of Islam should have these three qualities: Faith, patience, and vigilance. The Qur'an qualifies 'the believers' with patience, while about the disbelievers, the verse says:

"...for they are a people who do not understand."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 66

الْآنَ خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا ۚ فَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

66. ***"Now Allah has lightened it for you, and He knows that there is weakness in you. So, if there be of you a hundred patient (steadfast men), they will overcome two hundred; and if there be of you a thousand, they will overcome two thousand by the leave of Allah; and Allah is with the patient (steadfast ones)."***

The purpose of 'weakness', mentioned in the verse, is weakness in Faith and spiritualities, because the troops of Islam had not become decreased from the point of physical strength and number when they defeated.

In this verse, and the verse before it, the Qur'an points to three spiritual aspects which are the factors of victory, the absence of which is a preparation for defeat; they are: patience, Faith, and vigilance.

Thus, the main function in victory is by the leave and Will of Allah, else, in the Battle of Hunayn, where there were so many fighters Muslims defeated and ran away.

The verse says:

"Now Allah has lightened it for you, and He knows that there is weakness in you. So, If there be of you a hundred patient (steadfast men), they will overcome two hundred; and if there be of you a thousand, they will overcome two thousand by the leave of Allah..."

However, the patients are loved by Allah and they are in His refuge. The verse ends as follows:

"...and Allah is with the patient (steadfast ones)."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 67

مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ أَسْرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يُثْخِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ تُرِيدُونَ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

67*. "It is not* (*fit*) *for any prophet to have captives unless he has thoroughly triumphed in the land. You desire the transitory world, while Allah desires* (*for you*) *the Hereafter; and Allah is the Mighty the Wise."*

Allah has allowed no prophet to take the members of the enemy as captives and to keep them as pledge in order to take money from them, or hold them under obligation and let them go; unless that he exaggerates in killing the heathens an destroying them so that it becomes as a warning to others and that he gains authority. The verse says:

"It is not* (*fit*) *for any prophet to have captives unless he has thoroughly triumphed in the land..."

The next phrase of the verse addresses the Muslims, not the Prophet (S) because their desire was that they could take money from the captives and let them go. The purpose is that, in the first battle, i.e. the Battle of Badr, before gaining authority on the earth, they took ransom.

The Arabic phrase: /'arad-ad-dunya/ means the property of the world which is something vanishable. The verse continues saying:

"...you desire the transitory world..."

You pursue the wealth of the world while Allah desires the rewards of the Hereafter for you. The verse says:

"...while Allah desires* (*for you*) *the Hereafter..."

The helpers of Allah will never be defeated, and verily Allah acts wisely; then, do perform whatever He commands you, so that you enjoy the help of Allah. The verse ends:

"...and Allah is the Mighty the Wise."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verses 68-69

لَوْلَا كِتَابٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِيمَا أَخَذْتُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا غَنِمْتُمْ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

68. ***"Had it not been for a prior ordinance from Allah, there would have fallen you a great chastisement for what you had taken to*** **(*improperly*)*."***

69. ***"Eat then of what you have acquired in war as booty,*** **(*which is*)** ***lawful and good; and be in awe of Allah; verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."***

Once more in this verse the Qur'an reprimands and scorns those who put into danger the important social interests for their own fleeting financial gains. It says:

"Had it not been for a prior ordinance from Allah, there would have fallen you a great chastisement for what you had taken to **(*improperly*)*."***

But, as it was mentioned in some other verses of the Qur'an before, Allah's way of treatment is that, at first He explains the ordinances, then there will be His punishment for the disobedient of them.

In the second verse, the Qur'an refers to another ordinance of the ordinances concerning captives of war, and points to the question of ransom.

After the time when the Battle of Badr was ended and some captives were taken, a group of Ansar (the Helpers) told the Prophet (S) that they had killed seventy pagans and had kept seventy of them in captive, all of whom were from his tribe and, in fact, they were his captives.

They asked the Prophet (S) to remit those captives to them so that they could take ransom from them for their emancipation. When the Prophet (S) was waiting for the descent of revelation in this regard, the verse was revealed and the permission of taking 'ransom' for their emancipation was issued.

However, the verse lets Muslims use this spoil of the war, (i.e. the amount they used to take for emancipating captives). It says:

"Eat then of what you have acquired in war as booty, **(*which is*)** ***lawful and good..."***

This sentence may have a vast meaning, and, besides the subject of 'ransom', it encompasses other booties, too.

Then, it commands them to be Godwary and to avoid disobeying Allah. The verse continues saying:

"...and be in awe of Allah;"

This meaning refers to the fact that these kinds of booties being lawful should not cause that the aim of strugglers in battlefields to be gathering spoils of war or taking some captives for ransom, and if formerly they had such disgraceful intentions in mind, they must leave them out now.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an promises remition and forgiveness about the past when it says:

“...verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

Section 10: Captives of War

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 70

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِمَنْ فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ مِنَ الْأَسْرَىٰ إِنْ يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا يُؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِمَّا أُخِذَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

70. ***“O Prophet! Say to the captives in your hands: ‘If Allah knows any good in your hearts, He will give you better than what has been taken away from you, and He will forgive you; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”***

In the occasion of revelation of the verse, it has been cited that ‘Abbas,, Aqil, and Nufil were captured as captives of war in the Battle of Badr. By taking ransom, the Prophet (S) emancipated them, and they embraced Islam. Later, the money which was taken as their ransom was returned to them, too.[1]

(Most commentary books indicate that in the Battle of Badr some Muslims said that: for observing the respectability of the Prophet (S) ‘Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, should not be taken ransom from.

The Prophet (S) said:

“By Allah, I do not renounce a dirham (a silver coin) of it.”

Then, the Prophet (S) told his uncle:

“You are wealthy; then pay ransom for yourself and for your brother's son, Aqil.”

‘Abbas said:

“If I pay ransom, I will become empty of money.”

The Prophet (S) answered:

“You can spend out of money you have in Mecca with your wife, ‘Umm-ul- ‘Fadl.”

‘Abbas said:

“None knew this matter. I understood that you are tru1y a prophet.”

And, at once, he became a Muslim at his presence.)

In the Islamic system, there are three choices of designs for war captives:

1- Emancipating them without ransom; like what happened in the conquest of Mecca, where no captive was taken.

2- Emancipation of captives of war by taking ransom in cash, or by exchange of captives.

3- Keeping captives under the control of Muslims in order to hinder the enemy of Islam to be strengthened, and to teach Islam gradually to them both, maybe they be guided to it.

Choosing either of these three choices to be practically acted is in the authority of the Islamic judge.

Captives must be treated in such a manner that it prepares them to be guided. Thus, the aim of war is guiding people and defeating the legitimate ruler, not slaughtering, spoiling, taking captives d taking ransom.

That is why preaching and guiding captives is necessary.

The verse says:

"O Prophet! Say to the captives in your hands:…"

And, the true 'good' is Faith. The holy verse continues saying:

"…If Allah knows any good in your hearts, He will give you better than what has been taken away from you, and He will forgive you; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 71

وَإِنْ يُرِيدُوا خِيَانَتَكَ فَقَدْ خَانُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَأَمْكَنَ مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

71*. "And if they intend to betray against you, then they have been betraying Allah from before, but He gave (you) power over them; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.!"*

Muslims should neither treat the troops of the enemy with one hundred percent of suspicion, nor in a full favorable opinion. There should be neither a bare harshness nor a mere kindness, but they should be alert, confident in Allah, decisive, and merciful.

The manner of enemies is always treacherous. The verse says:

"And if they intend to betray against you, then they have been betraying Allah from before…"

But Allah is right and legitimate, and gives triumph to His adherents. The verse continues saying:

"...but He gave* (*you*) *power over them..."

Allah is aware of the enemies' intentions, and in the commandments Which He issues, He is the Wise and the Controller of common Interest.

The verse says:

"...and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 72

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آوَوْا وَنَصَرُوا أُولَٰئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ وَلَايَتِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا ۚ وَإِنِ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمُ النَّصْرُ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

72. "Verily those who believed and migrated and strove with their properties and their selves in the way of Allah, and those who gave shelter and helped* (*the strivers*)*, those are friends one of another. And those who believed but they did not migrate, you have not any friendship towards them until they migrate. Yet if they ask your help for* (*the sake of*) *religion, then it is your duty to help* (*them*)*, save against a people with whom you have a treaty; and Allah sees all that you do."

Those who had Faith and, for the love of Allah and Messenger, separated from their homes and relations, i.e. they migrated from Mecca to Medina, and those who gave shelter to the Emigrants and helped them in war against their enemies, i.e. Ansar (the Helpers), inherit each other.

The Emigrants and the Helpers inherited from each other because of the brethren contract they concluded from the beginning with each other until the time when this matter was abrogated by Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 75, which says:

"...and the blood relatives are nearer to each other...".

If the believers who did not migrate ask you to help them for the sake of the religion of Allah against infidels, you should help them, except for the group of infidels who have concluded the agreement of non-opposition with you. In this case you cannot help the Muslims in war against them. The verse says:

"Verily those who believed and migrated and strove with their properties and their selves in the way of Allah, and those who gave shelter and helped* (*the strivers*)*, those are friends one of another. And those who believed but they did not migrate, you have not any friendship towards them until they migrate. Yet if they ask your help for* (*the sake of*) *religion, then it is your duty to

help (them), save against a people with whom you have a treaty; and Allah sees all that you do."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 73

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ تَكُنْ فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ

73. *"And (as for) those who disbelieve, they are friends one of another. If you do not so, there will be confusion in the earth and a greater mischief."*

The meaning of this verse is that Muslims should refrain from being friends of infidels and helping them, though they may be their close relatives. They should leave out their guardianship, too.

If you do not do what Allah (s.w.t) has commanded you, there will appear a great confusion and a great mischief in the earth.

That is, if you do not settle a relation of brotherhood between yourselves, and some of you do not take one another as guardians, even by inheriting from each other, and do not prefer the connection of Islam to the connection of relationship, nor cut off the communication between you and pagans, you will confront a great confusion and mischief in the earth.

For, as long as Muslims are not untied before infidels, polytheism will remain and pagans will be bold upon Muslims and will call them towards infidelity.

The verse says:

"And (as for) those who disbelieve, they are friends one of another. If you do not so, there will be confusion in the earth and a greater mischief."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 74

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آوَوْا وَنَصَرُوا أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا ۚ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ

74. *"And (as for) those who believed and migrated and strove in the way of Allah, and those who gave shelter and helped, those are the believers truly; for them is forgiveness and a noble sustenance."*

Then Allah refers again to the Emigrants and the Helpers (Ansar) and admires them. The verse says:

"And (as for) those who believed and migrated and strove in the way of Allah, and those who

gave shelter and helped, those are the believers truly…"

The evidence of this statement is that they both emigrated, and helped the Muslims, and separated from their relatives, and also, by spending their properties for the sake of the religion of Allah, they proved their true Faith. The verse continues saying:

"…for them is forgiveness and a noble sustenance."

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 75

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْ بَعْدُ وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا مَعَكُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنْكُمْ ۚ وَأُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

75. ***"And those who believed afterwards and migrated and strove with you, they are of you, and the blood relations are nearer to each other, in the book of Allah; verily Allah knows everything."***

The objective of the first part of the verse is those who believed after the first Emigration, and they migrated, too. The verse saying:

"And those who believed afterwards and migrated and strove with you…"

It is similar to the content of Surah Al-Hashr, No. 59, verse 10, which says:

"And those who came after them…"

The verse continues saying:

"…they are of you…"

This holy phrase means that they are like you and their judgment from the point of obligation of their friendship and helping them is the same as the Judgement of yours, although they believed and migrated after you.

"…and the blood relations are nearer to each other…"

That is, relatives are in precedence when they inherit. In (other words, when inheriting, some of them are more deserve from some others of the relatives.

This ordinance has been abrogated the heritage ordinance which had been issued because of Emigration and helping.

"…in the book of Allah…"

Some of the commentators have said that the holy phrase ***"in the book of Allah"*** means in the 'Protected Tablet', while some others have said that this holy phrase here means: 'in the Qur'an'. This holy verse can be taken as an evidence to the fact that whoever is nearer to the dead, from the point of relation, is more deserve to inheriting from him. The verse ends as follows:

"…verily Allah knows everything."

1. Tafsir-i-Nur-uth- Thaqalayn

Surah At-Tawbah, Chapter 9

Surah At-Tawbah or Surah Barā'at,
No. 9 (129 verses)

The Feature of Surah At-Tawbah

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

This Surah, which is the ninth Surah of the Qur'ān, contains 129 verses and has been revealed in the ninth year A.H. (anno Hejira). Some parts of the Surah were revealed before the Battle of Tabūk, some parts during the Battle, and other parts were revealed after it.

Regarding the Islamic literature, the most recorded known names of this Surah are 'At-Tawbah' and 'Al-Barā'at'. Since the subject of repentance of man and the return of the grace of Allah has repeatedly been referred to in this Surah, it has been called 'At-Tawbah', and for the fact that the Surah begins with the declaration of immunity towards idolaters, it has been named 'Al-Barā'at'.

The subject matters of this Surah are mostly related to the subject matters of Surah Al-'Anfāl. For this matter, some commentators, considering this Surah the continuation of that one, have said that, because of this circumstance, Surah At-Tawbah has not needed to have the holy phrase Bismillāh-ir-Rahmān-ir-Rahim.

But, according to Sh'iah's belief, the traditions which have been received from Ahlul-Bayt (as) denote that this Surah is independent and the absence of Bismillāh at its beginning is for its wrathful tone due to the idolaters. The holy phrase Bismillāh is an indication of mercy and security, while this Surah has been commenced with the declaration of immunity towards perjured idolaters.

For the importance of this Surah, the word of the Messenger of Allah (S) is sufficient when he said:

“The Suras Al-Barā’t and Tauhid were revealed accompanied with seventy thousand rows of the angels.”

Section 1: Immunity Declared

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 1

بَرَآءَةٌ مِنَ اللّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُم مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

1. “(This is a declaration of) immunity from Allah and His Messenger towards those of the polytheists with whom you made covenant.”

Some Points Necessary to Be Noted

1- In the Islamic traditions, the name of this Surah has been introduced as ‘Barā’at’ and ‘Tawbah’. This fact makes it clear that this Surah is not a part of Surah Al-’Anfāl, but it is an independent one.

2- The content of this Surah has a tone of indignation. For this reason it has begun without the holy phrase Bismillāh. By this sign we understand that the holy phrase Bismillāh-ir-Rahmān-ir-Rahim at the beginning of every Surah belongs to that very Surah and is a part of it. Thus, this holy phrase has not been located as a ceremonial phrase at the beginning of every Surah.

3- The declaration of Barā’at (immunity) was for the infidels’ perjury which has been referred to in verses 7 and 8 of the current Surah. In Islam, the general law is that promises should be fulfilled, and as long as the opposite party is faithful to the treaty, it should be kept, too.

Moreover, in that circumstance, it was for the reason of their weakness that the Muslims had to accept that treaty, else, the desire of the Muslims was the destruction of idolism as rapidly as possible.

Some Details Upon These Verses

In the eighth year A.H., Mecca was conquered, but the pagans still continued coming into Meccan to perform their worshipping rites which was, of course, a mixture of superstitions and aberrations.

Among their customs it was seen that they used to give in charity the clothing with which they had circumambulated. Once it happened that a woman desired to perform some more circumambulations

after finishing her first circumambulation, but, since she had no more clothes with her, she had to circumambulate nakedly while people were watching her.

That circumstance was not tolerable for the Prophet (S) and the Muslims, who were in a very high degree of power. The Prophet (S) was waiting for the command of Allah until when this Surah was revealed in Medina.

The Messenger of Allah (S) commissioned Abū-Bakr to convey some verses of it unto the people of Mecca. The Prophet (S) chose him, maybe, for the reason that he was an old man and people were not sensitive to him.

But, after Abū-Bakr had left Medina towards Mecca, Angel Gobriel appeared to the Holy Prophet (S) and brought a Message from Allah denoting that the recital of those verses of the Qur’ān should be conveyed either by the Holy Prophet himself or by the one who is of him. As soon as the divine command was received, the Prophet (S) called Hadrat Ali (as) and instructed him to do it. He said:

“I am his and he is mine.”

It was so that, in the midst of the way, Ali (as) took away the verses from him and went into Mecca where he recited them unto the pagans.

The details of the recitation of the verses of this Surah by Ali (as) are recorded in the books of the Sunnites, too. Some Prophet’s companions such as: Abū-Bakr himself, Ali (as), Ibn-‘Abbās, ‘Anas-ibn-Mālik and Jābir-ibn-‘Abdillah’Ansāri have narrated them and quoted them inside a lot of Islamic sources.[1]

Some of the Sunnite writers have tried to pretend this fact as an ordindary matter so that it would not be counted as a kind of privilege for Hadrat Ali (as).

They have considered the mission of recitation of the verses given to Ali (as) as a manner of complying with his request, not as a privilege for him; while for complying with any one’s request, a safe mission might be given to him, not the recitation of the verses of declaration of Barā’at (immunity) from pagans, in the region of infidelity and by a person who had killed many of the idolaters in different wars and where a lot of the people were carrying his hatred in their hearts.

When Allah commanded Moses (as) to go toward Pharaoh in order to invite him to Unity, he (as) said:

“My Lord! Verily I killed one of them, so I fear lest they should slay me;”.[2]

Then he asked Him to send his brother Aaron with him as an aider. But, Ali (as), who had killed a large number of the chiefs of pagans, went alone towards them and recited the verses of immunity unto them with the utmost calmness. This event happened in a sensitive place, i.e. Muna, where the site of the last lapidation was located near-by.

The subjects which were revealed and were announced unto pagans by Ali (as) were as follows:

1- Acquittal declared, and treaties cancelled.

2- The prohibition of pagans participating in Hajj from the following year.

3- The prohibition of circumambulation around the Ka'bah in the state of nakedness.

4- The prohibition of pagans entering the Sacred Mosque.

The holy phrase: ***"(This is a declaration of) immunity from Allah "*** indicates that this acquittal is from the side of Allah.

And the, phrase: ***"and His Messenger "***, mentioned immediately after it, means that the strings of promises and treaties were cut off, respites were ended, and agreements were cancelled.

The addressee 'you' in the sentence: ***"towards those of the polytheists with whom you made covenant "*** is both the Messenger of Allah (S) and the Muslims. Thus, it means that they should declare immunity unto the polytheists between whom and them there was an agreement, because Allah (s.w.t.) and His Messenger (S) are quit of them.

The objective meaning here is that Allah (s.w.t.) and His Messenger (S) are quit of giving a promise to them and, after that, fulfilling it, because the polytheists who made covenants with them broke their promises.

If someone asks how it is permissible for the Prophet (S) to break his promise, the answer is that it is permissible for the Prophet (S) to break his promise by one of the following ways:

1) The fulfilment of the promise was conditioned that there would not come any other command from Allah, the Exalted, upon it, and since there came down a revelation instructing that there would remain no covenant thereafter, the Messenger of Allah (S) broke the covenant.

2) Since treachery and perjury was made manifest from the side of idolaters, Allah, the Exalted, instructed His Prophet (S) to break their covenant, too.

3) That covenant was not a permanent (and an absolute) treaty, but it was bound over a definite point of time and for a certain length of time, so that when its term was ended that covenant would be broken, either.

It has also been pointed out in some traditions that the Messenger of Allah (S) had conditioned the above mentioned matters with them in the treaty. It has also been narrated that the idolaters broke their promise or decided to break it.

Then, Allah, the Glorified, commanded His Prophet to break their covenant, too Next to that, through the

following verse, Allah, the Glorified, addressing the idolaters, says:

“So go about in the earth...”.

Explanations

1- Fulfilment the promise, yes; but surrending to plots, never. The verse says:

“(This is a declaration of) immunity from Allah and His Messenger towards those of the polytheists with whom you made covenant.”

2- The legislator is Allah,[3] of course, but in conduct and action, Allah and the Messenger of Allah are mentioned beside each other:

“...from Allah and His Messenger...”

3- It is true that legally we have to be faithful to our treaties, but heartily immunity from polytheists and those who deviated from the straight path is a religious principle in Islam.[4]

4- If a treaty is cancelled because of fear from a plot and a treachery, it should be announced to the opposite party, in order that they might not be seized unawares.

5- Immunity is a sign of sharp conclusiveness and authority; while being silent before plots and breach of covenants is a sign of weakness and abasement.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 2

فَسِيحُوا فِي الأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللّهِ وَأَنَّ اللّهَ مُخْزِي الْكَافِرِينَ

2. *“So go about in the earth freely for four months, and know that you can not make futile Allah, and that Allah degrades the infidels.”*

The Qur’ānic phrase: ***“So go about in the earth freely...”*** addresses the pagans of Mecca meaning that they could go about freely, and with peace of mind, in the land of Mecca and, being in easy circumstances. They were allowed to supply their necessities during that time when they were in security from the swords of the Muslims.

Then, it continues saying: ***“...for four months...”*** which means when this time was ended and the pagans did not embrace Islam, the string of their covenant would be broken and the security of life and wealth would be removed from them.

“...and know that you can not make futile Allah...”

That is, they should know that they could not escape from Allah, since wherever they might be they were under the Power and Command of Allah.

"...and that Allah degrades the infidels."

This part of the verse means that they should also know that Allah will bring disgrace to the unbelievers.

Regarding the question that which months were the four months that Allah respited the pagans, most commentators have said that this time had been from the beginning of Shawwāl until the end of Muharram, because these verses were revealed in Shawwāl.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 3

وَأَذَانٌ مِنَ اللّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الاَكْبَرِ أَنَّ اللّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ فَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللّهِ وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

3. ***"And (this) is proclamation from Allah and His Messenger to the people on the day of the great pilgrimage that Allah and His Messenger are quit of the polytheists. Yet if you repent, that will be better for you, and if you turn back, then know that you can not make futile Allah; and inform those who disbelieve of a painful punishment."***

Once more the Qur'ān announces the cancellation of the treaties of pagans with a stronger emphasis. It even assigns the date of its proclamation when the verse says:

"And this is proclamation from Allah and His Messenger to the people on the day of the great pilgrimage that Allah and His Messenger are quit of the polytheists..."

In fact, by this public proclamation in the land of Mecca and on that great day, Allah has shut the enemies' ways of seeking pretext, and cut off the tongue of slanderers so that they might not say that they were seized unawares and were attacked unduely.

Then the verse addresses the pagans themselves and, through a kind of encouragement and warning, uses effort to guide them. At first, it implies that if they repent and return to Allah, with desisting from idolatry, it will be better for them. The verse says:

"...Yet if you repent, that will be better for you..."

That is, if they embrace Islam, the religion of Unity, it is good for their own selves both in this world and the next one. And, if they contemplate properly, they will understand that, under its ray, all disturbances will turn to peace and arrangement, and it is not so that their right belief brings any benefit for Allah (s.w.t.) and the Prophet (S).

After that statement, the Qur’ān warns the zealous and stubborn opponents, saying that if they disobey this command, which supplies their own happiness, they should know that they can never weaken Allah, nor are they able to go outside of His Might. The verse continues saying:

“...and if you turn back, then know that you can not make futile Allah...”

Finally, the verse alarms those who resist obstinately not to believe, and says:

“...and inform those who disbelieve of a painful punishment.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 4

إِلاَّ الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُّم مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنقُصُوكُمْ شَيْئاً وَلَمْ يُظَاهِرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَحَداً فَأَتِمُّوا إِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمْ إِلَى مُدَّتِهِمْ إِنَّ اللّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ

4. ***“Except those of the polytheists with whom you made covenant, and who have not failed you in anything nor have supported anyone against you. Then fulfil their treaty with them until (the end of) their term; surely Allah loves the pious ones.”***

This unilateral cancellation of pagans’ covenants related only to those pagans from whom some signs of perjury, or preparation of perjury, had been appeared. Therefore, in this holy verse, one group of the polytheists have been excepted. The Qur’ān says:

“Except those of the polytheists with whom you made covenant, and who have not failed you in anything nor have supported anyone against you...”

Thus, the command of Allah about conducting with this group is as follows:

“...Then fulfil their treaty with them until (the end of) their term...”

The reason of this exception is stated that Allah loves the pious ones, those who avoid any perjury and transgression.

It says:

“...surely Allah loves the pious ones.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 5

فَإِذَا انسَلَخَ الأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدتُّمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ وَاحْصُرُوهُمْ وَاقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصَدٍ فَإِن تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلاَةَ وَءَاتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ إِنَّ اللّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

5. ***“Then when the sacred months are drawn away, slay the polytheists wherever you find them, and seize them and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush. But if they repent and perform the prayer and pay the poor-rate, (zakāt) then leave their way free to them; verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”***

In this verse, the duty of Muslims towards pagans after their respite, which was four months, has been stated, where the most intensive instruction has been issued upon them. It says:

“Then when the sacred months are drawn away, slay the polytheists wherever you find them…”

Next to that, it continues saying:

“…and seize them…” in order to take them captives.

The verse, then adds that they must be put in the circle of besiege. It says:

“…and besiege them…”

After that, the verse extends the statement against them, and says:

“…and lie in wait for them in every ambush…”

This harshness of action is for the sake that Islam’s plan is to root out idolatry from the whole points of the earth, since idolatry is not a creed or religion which could be respected.

But, this harshness and severity is not in the sense that the way of return is shut to them, but whenever and wherever they decide they can change their direction. That is why, immediately next to that, the Qur’ān adds:

“…But if they repent and perform the prayer and pay the poor-rate, (zakāt) then leave their way free to them…”

As for the reason of this opportunity, it is said that Allah is Forgiving and Merciful, and He does not repel from Himself the one who returns to Him. The verse ends with the following phrase:

“…verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 6

وإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلاَمَ اللّهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ

6. ***“And if any of the polytheists seeks protection from you, grant him protection till he hears the Word of Allah; then do convey him to his place of security; that is because they are a people who***

do not know."

This verse means that if after passing four months of respite one of the idolaters, against whom you were commanded to fight, comes to you and asks for security to hearken to your invitation and to the reasoning of the Qur'ān, do respite him and explain your aim to him. Then do respite him to listen to the Word of Allah and to contemplate over it. The verse says:

"And if any of the polytheists seeks protection from you, grant him protection till he hears the Word of Allah..."

The manner in which the Qur'ān has appointed only the Word of Allah and has said: ***"...till he hears the word of Allah..."*** is for the reason that the most important proofs lie in the very Word of Allah.

Then the verse continues saying:

"...then do convey him to his place of security..."

This part of the verse means that if the one embraced Islam, he would obtain the goodness and prosperity of two worlds; and if the one did not embrace Islam, you should not kill him in order to avoid deceiving him, but you should send him to his own home where he has security of life and wealth.

The concluding phrase of the holy verse is as follows:

"...that is because they are a people who do not know."

This phrase means that this respite is for the sake that such people are some ones who do not know the Faith and the reasons of Islam. Then, you should respite them so that they hear, contemplate well and become cognizant.

1. Musnad Ahmad-I-Hanbal, vol. 3, pp. 213 and 283; and vol. 1 pp. 151 and 330 – Mustadrak Sahihayn, vol. 3, p. 51 – Tafsir-i-Al-Manūr, vol. 10, p. 57 – Tafsir-i-Tabari, vol. 10, p. 46 – Tafsir-i-Ibn-I-Kathir, vol. 2, pp. 322 and 333 – Ihghāgh-ul-Haghgh, vol. 5, p. 368 – Fadā'il-ul-Khamsah, vol. 2, p. 342 – The names of 73 authors who have recorded this event in their commentary books, like Fakhr-i-Rāzi and 'Ālūsi, are mentioned in Al-Qadir, vol. 6, p. 338
2. Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 33
3. Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 26 says: "...and He does not make any one His associate in His Judgement."
4. This fact is current whether it is in the favour and grace, as in this Surah, verse No. 74 says: "... Allah and His Messenger enriched them out of His grace..."; or in allegiance the Qur'ān says: " Verily those who swear their fealty unto you do but swear fealty unto Allah..." (Surah Al-Fath, No. 48, verse 10); or in obedience: "Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah..." (Surah An-Nisā', No. 4, verse 80); or in immunity, like this verse. (Tafsir-I-Atyab-ul-Bayān)

Section 2: The Immunity – Its Reason Explained

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 7

كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ عِندَ اللّهِ وَعِندَ رَسُولِهِ إِلاَّ الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُّمْ عِندَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ فَمَا اسْتَقَامُوا لَكُمْ فَاسْتَقِيمُوا لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ

7. ***"How can there be a covenant for the polytheists with Allah and with His Messenger? Except those with whom you made covenant at the Holy Mosque; so long as they stand faithful to you, then be you (too) faithful to them; verily Allah loves the pious ones."***

Through the previous verses, Allah (s.w.t.) commanded the covenants of the pagans to be cancelled. Here, in this verse, it explains that the reason of that commandment was the very perjury which appeared from them. But, concerning those pagans who were faithful to their covenants, the Qur'ān instructs to having perseverance with them. So, it says:

"How can there be a covenant for the polytheists with Allah and with His Messenger?..."

This phrase of the verse means how they may have the covenant of friendship while they have decided in their hearts to breach the covenant. This statement (of interrogation) is said either because of wonder, or as a positive interrogation with a negative sense.

Some commentators have said that this verse means how may Allah instruct that you desist from shedding the blood of pagans? Then, He has exceptioned the following group of pagans, and said:

"...Except those with whom you made covenant at the Holy Mosque..."

This part of the verse means that they have covenant with Allah, because they do not intend in their hearts to perform any perjury or treachery against you.

Then the verse continues saying:

"...so long as they stand faithful to you, then be you (too) faithful to them..."

That is, so long as they are faithful to their covenant and remain in the straight way with you upon their promise, you should act with the same manner, too.

And, the last phrase of the verse indicates that Allah loves the pious, the ones who avoid perjury. The verse says:

"...verily Allah loves the pious ones."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 8

كَيْفَ وإِن يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ لايَرْقُبُوا فِيكُمْ إِلاًّ وَلا ذِمَّةً يُرْضُونَكُم بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتَأْبَى قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

8. ***"How*** **(*can it be?*)** ***For if they prevail against you, they will observe towards you neither ties of relationship nor treaty. They please you with their mouths while their hearts do not conscent, and most of them are ungodly."***

The repetition of the word 'How' in this verse is for the reason that it seems improbable and rare that pagans stand faithful to their covenant.

Then, it's meaning (the verb of which has been omitted) is: how there may remain a covenant for them while if they acquire mastery and prevail upon you, knowing the background of your Faith and your covenants, they will observe neither any ties of relationship nor any promise and treaty. The verse says:

"How **(*can it be?*)** ***For if they prevail against you, they will observe towards you neither ties of relationship nor treaty..."***

The Arabic word: /'ill/ means 'relationship' and it has also been used in the sense of 'oath'.

By the usage of the word / yard�nakum / (they please you) in the verse, Allah has qualified the state of pagans meaning that their inwards are opposite from their outwards. The verse says:

"...They please you with their mouths..."

Then, the verse has been continued implying that the grudges and enmities they have in their hearts are different from the nice words they utter through their mouths.

"...while their hearts do not conscent..."

Finally, in the continuation of qualifications of pagans, the verse denotes that most of them excess in infidelity and idolatry and do not have any virtue and manliness to prevent them from these affairs, while there are some pagans who usually show chastity in committing what is disgrace, and refrain from breaching promise and perjury. The verse ends as follows:

"...and most of them are ungodly."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 9

اشْتَرَوْا بِآيَاتِ اللّهِ ثَمَناً قَلِيلاً فَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِهِ إِنَّهُمْ سَآءَ مَاكَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

9*. "They have sold the signs of Allah for a small price, and have hindered* (*people*) *from His way. Surely evil was what they used to do."*

In exchange for losing the signs of Allah, whatever they gain is naught. The verse says:

"They have sold the signs of Allah for a small price..."

Human beings are free in action and choosing the way, and all the Divine verses which refer to the bargains of human beings are the signs indicating to his freedom. The holy verse continues saying:

"...and have hindered* (*people*) *from His way..."

Therefore, selling the pleasure of Allah and the eternal Paradise for the corruptive fleeting world is the worst work, because the whole world, and whatever is found in it, in the face of favours of Allah bestowed to the believers, is a small thing. That is why the verse says:

"...Surely evil was what they used to do."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 10

لاَيَرْقُبُونَ فِي مُؤْمِنٍ إِلاًّ وَلاَ ذِمَّةً وَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُعْتَدُونَ

10*. "They observe towards a believer neither ties of relationship nor treaty, and these are they who are the transgressors."*

This verse is again upon the statement of Allah's Wisdom due to His severe command instructing to quitting pagans.

In the previous couple of verses, the meaning was about the lack of observing treaty towards the Muslims; ***"...they will not observe towards you any ties of relationship or treaty...",*** while, here, the meaning of: ***"They observe towards a believer neither ties of relationship nor Treaty..."*** has been pointed out, which is a statement of their quarrelsomeness towards any believer.

Thus, pagans have enmity against the believers, then, never be in any doubt that you should struggle severely against them. In the opinion of infidels, the greatest fault of Muslims is the very Faith they have in Allah, and the same thing is the pretext of their hostility towards them. The verse says:

"They observe towards a believer neither ties of relationship nor treaty..."

However, perjury is the same as transgression. So the verse says:

“...and these are they who are the transgressors.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 11

فإِن تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلاَةَ وَءَاتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَنُفَصِّلُ الآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

11. ***“But if they repent and perform the prayer and pay the alms (zakāt), then they are your brethren in faith; and We explain the signs for the people who know.”***

In the former verses of this Surah, Allah’s commandment was: ***“...But if they repent and perform the prayer and pay the alms, then leave their way free to them...”*** (verse 5), while in this verse, He instructs that not only you should not bother them, but also do forget the past and treat them as if they are your brothers. The verse says:

“But if they repent and perform the prayer and pay the alms (zakāt), then they are your brethren in faith; and We explain the signs for the people who know.”

Explanations

1. In confronting them, observe the style of graduality and proceed step by step. At first, there is the lack of opposition: ***“...then leave their way free to them...”*** and then:

“...they are your brethren in faith...”.

2. A true repentance is accompanied with action:

“...they repent and perform the prayer...”

3. Those who do not perform the prayer and do not pay the alms are not our brethren in faith, as the verse says:

“...if... perform... and pay... then they are your brethren in faith...”

4. The basis of a Muslim’s relations, and love and enmity, is the religion, as in the verse next to the above mentioned verse, it is said:

“...if they break their oaths... then fight...”

5. The condition of entering into the circle of ‘brethren in faith’ is prayer and alms.

6. You should have a brotherly treatment with a repenter.

“...if they repent... then they are your brethren...”

7. Those who were deserving death formerly, now, under the light of repentance, prayer, and alms are equal in rights with Muslims.

“...then they are your brethren in faith...”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 12

وَإِن نَكَثُوا أَيْمَانَهُم مِن بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ وَطَعَنُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ فَقَاتِلُوا أَئِمَّةَ الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لاَ أَيْمَانَ لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنتَهُونَ

12. ***“But if they break their oaths after their covenant and revile your religion, then fight the leaders of infidelity. Verily there is no oath for them, so that they may desist.”***

Once Ali-ibn-Abi Tālib (as) was asked why the fugitives of the Battle of Seffin were persued, but in the Battle of Camel the fugitives were left free.

He (as) said that in Seffin the leader of infidelity was alive and the fugitives would gather around him. And, after being formed, they might attack. But in the Battle of Camel, where their leader was killed, there was not any pivot around which they could be formed and organized again.

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“Whoever makes sarcastic remarks to your religion, he will surely become infidel.” Then he (as) recited this verse.[1]

Explanations

1. Since the origin of perjury and deriding the religion is often from the side of the chiefs of infidelity, then struggle hard against them. The verse says:

“But if they break their oaths after their covenant and revile your religion, then fight the leaders of infidelity...”

2. The Islamic Holy Struggle is for the defend of the religion. The verse says:

“...they break their oath... and revile your religion, then fight...”

3. Apostasy is one of the kinds of perjury and deriding the religion.

4. Oppose seriously against those who blaspheme.

5. When striving for the religion, make inquires of the chiefs of plotters, the central office of commanders, and organization, and destroy them.

“...the leaders of infidelity...”

6. Not any oath should beguile you; the oaths of the breachers of covenant are invalid. The verse says:

“...Verily there is no oath for them...”

7. The aim of the Islamic Holy Struggle is to prevent the enemy’s plot. The verse says:

“...so that they may desist.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 13

أَلاَ تُقَاتِلُونَ قَوْماً نَكَثُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ وَهَمُّوا بِإِخْرَاجِ الرَّسُولِ وَهُم بَدَءُوكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ أَتَخْشَوْنَهُمْ فَاللّهُ أَحَقُّ أَن تَخْشَوْهُ إِن كُنتُم مُؤْمِنِينَ

13. ***“Will you not fight a people who broke their oaths and aimed at the expulsion of the Messenger, and they did attack you first? Do you fear them? But Allah is most deserving that you should fear Him, if you are believers.”***

In order to encourage Muslims and to banish any kind of listlessness, fear, and hesitation concerning this vital affair from their minds and their selves, the Qur’ān says:

“Will you not fight a people who broke their oaths and aimed at the expulsion of the Messenger...”

You were not the beginners of attack and perjury to be worried and anxious about it, but the fight and perjury was started form their own side. The verse says:

“...and they did attack you first?...”

So, if some of you hesitate fighting against them because of fear, this fright is quietly improper. The verse continues saying:

“...Do you fear them? But Allah is most deserving that you should fear Him, if you are believers.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 14

قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبْهُمُ اللّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ

14. ***“Fight them, (and) Allah will punish them at your hands and degrade them, and He will help you (to victory) over them and heal the (injured) breasts of a people (who) believe.”***

There may be asked how it is that here, in this holy verse, the statement is upon the chastisement of people while in Surah Al–‘Anfāl, No. 8, verse 32 the Qur’ān, addressing the Prophet (S) says:

“But Allah is not to punish them while you are among them…”.

The answer of this question is that the objective meaning of that verse is the heavenly chastisements which are destructive, like the chastisements of the People of ‘Ād and Thamūd. In this verse, the words are about the hardship and punishment of fight. The verse says:

“Fight them, (***and***) ***Allah will punish them at your hands and degrade them, and He will help you*** (***to victory***) ***over them and heal the*** (***injured***)***breasts of a people*** (***who***) ***believe.”***

Explanations

1– Presence in the scene and Holy Struggle should be shown from your side, and then help and assistance come from Allah.

“Fight them, (***and***) ***Allah will punish them at your hands and degrade them, and He will help you…”***

2– Strivers of Holy Struggles are Allah’s arms and His executive factors.

“…And Allah will punish them at your hands…”

3– The normatic customs of Allah are executed through the natural ways, causes and means.

“…at your hands…”

4– Next to the martial defeat of the enemy, there comes the turn of a spiritual and political knock.

“…will punish them and degrade them…”

5– The aim of an Islamic war is to efface infidelity, to disgrace infidels, and to bring peace for the believers.

“… He will punish them and degrade them… and heal the (***injured***) ***hearts of a people*** (***who***) ***believe.”***

6– It is necessary to have encouragement and preaching before war.

7– It is true that in war there will some people be martyred and some others become remorseful, but the Islamic community will continue to live in peace and honour.

8– In social affairs, the fate of the believers relates to each other. Thus, your victory is the remedy of the injured hearts of other believers.

“...He will help you (to victory) over them and heal the (injured) hearts of a people (who) believe.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 15

وَيُذْهِبْ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَيَتُوبُ اللّهُ عَلَى مَن يَشَآءُ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

15. ***“And He removes the rage of their hearts, and Allah turns (mercifully) to whomever He pleases, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”***

Finally, in the conflict between right and wrong, after bearing the bitterness of troubles, the sweetness of triumph is for the believers. The verse says:

“And He removes the rage of their hearts...”

After gaining victory, you ought to receive those who come to you to join you, and you should not tell them where they were until then. The abovementioned verse, in this regard, says:

“...and Allah turns (mercifully) to whomever He pleases...”

You must never repel those who come to you because of the fear of their plot. Allah is aware of the true repentance or a hypocritic one but, according to the Divine Wisdom, with keeping the principles of security, whoever expresses Islam it should be accepted from him.

“...and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 16

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تُتْرَكُوا وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنكُمْ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذُوا مِن دُونِ اللّهِ وَلا رَسُولِهِ وَلا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلِيجَةً وَاللّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

16. ***“Or did you think (only with claim of Faith) you would be left (in peace) while Allah has not yet known those of you who have struggled hard and have not taken any one as an intimate friend besides Allah and His Messenger and the believers? And Allah is aware of what you do.”***

In this verse, the Muslims are encouraged to the Holy Struggle in another way. It attracts their attention to their heavy responsibility that they have in this regard.

It implies that they must not consider that only by claiming Faith everything will be arranged all right, but the truthfulness of their intention and the uprightness of their speech, and the reality of their belief will be made manifest when they confront the enemies, confronting them sincerely and free from any hypocrisy.

At first, the Qur'ān inquires whether they imagine that they will be left in peace and they will not be put in the course of examination. It is in this case that their strivers, and those of them who have not taken any one as confidant except Allah and the Prophet (S) and the believers, have not yet been known. The verse says:

"Or did you think (only with claim of Faith) you would be left (in peace) while Allah has not yet known those of you who have struggled hard and have not taken any one as an intimate friend besides Allah and His Messenger and the believers?..."

In fact, the abovementioned part of the verse reminds Muslims two subjects. These subjects are as that only with the bare claim of Faith the work is not completed, and the personality of people will not be made clear, but they will be examined by two means:

The first is Holly Struggle in the way of Allah with the purpose of effacing the effects of paganism and idolatry. And the second is the abandonment of any relation and cooperation with hypocrites. The former dismisses the foreign enemies, and the latter expels the internal enemies.

Then, as a warning and emphasis, at the end of the verse, it says:

"...And Allah is aware of what you do."

1. Tafsir-Nr-uth-Thaqalayn

Section 3: Service of the Sacred Mosque, and the Idolaters

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 17

مَا كَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَن يَعْمُرُوا مَسَاجِدَ اللّهِ شَاهِدِينَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِم بِالْكُفْرِ أُوْلَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ وَفِي النَّارِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ

17. ***"It is not for the polytheists to maintain the mosques of Allah, while they bear witness to unbelief against themselves. These it is whose deeds are null, and in the Fire shall they abide forever."***

It is true that the occasion of revelation of this verse is about the Sacred Mosque, yet its command concerns all mosques and, for the same reason, the word of 'mosques' has been applied in it, not the phrase of Sacred Mosque.

One of the items that was announced by Ali (as) in immunity from pagans was that the Sacred Mosque was not permitted to be mended by idolaters. They should not even enter it. This meaning has been pointed out in verse No. 27 of the current Surah. The above verse says:

"It is not for the polytheists to maintain the mosques of Allah, while they bear witness to unbelief against themselves. These it is whose deeds are null, and in the Fire shall they abide forever."

Explanations

1. Infidels are not permissible to interfere building mosques and also in foundations belonging to the culture and religion of Muslims.

2. Neither ever income is lawful, nor ever association is worthy. Be aware that because of the love of mosques in you infidels can penetrate in your religious affairs. The verse says:

"It is not for the polytheists to maintain the mosques of Allah..."

3. Those who pretend to impiety are not rightful to interfere in the religious affairs. The verse says:

"...while they bear witness to unbelief against themselves..."

4. In building and running the sacred centers and foundations, do not take the money of impious ones, so that they can not boast, interfere and expect any thing.

5. An action alone is not so important, but its intention has the essential function. The verse says:

"It is not for the polytheists to maintain..."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 18

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلاَةَ وءَاتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلاَّ اللّهَ فَعَسَى أُوْلَئِكَ أَن يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ

18. ***"Only he shall maintain the mosques of Allah who believes in Allah and the Last Day, and performs the prayer, and pays the alms (zakāt), and fears none but Allah. They, hopefully, will be among the guided."***

Mosques are the important centers of Muslims' worship and social activities. Therefore, both their custodians should be pure and pious and their programs must be constructive and educative. Also, their budget should be lawful, and those who haunt there must be godly and pious.

Otherwise, when the producers of mosques are some tyrants and aggressive rulers, and their prayer–

leaders are some illiterate coward persons, mosques will naturally remain far off from their main aim which is to be spiritually populated, not constructionally.

As the late Feyz-i-K�sh�ni has pointed out in his commentary book entitled: At-Tafsir-us-S�fi, maintaining a mosque includes: mending, cleanliness, pavement, light, teaching, and preaching. 1

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said: “When you see a man haunts a mosque, then testify to his Faith.”

Explanations

1. Maintaining a mosque and its custodianship needs some conditions:

From the point of belief, Faith in Origin and End is necessary.

From the point of practice, establishing prayers and paying alms are obligatory.

From the point of spirit, bravity and impenetrability are demanded.

2. If the custodians of mosques be brave enough, the mosques will be the center of helpful activities against transgression.

3. The duty of the custodians of godly mosques and the maintainers of them is helping the deprive. Therefore, they should be the givers of alms. The verse says:

“...and performs the prayer, and pays the alms (zak�t), and fears none but Allah...” 2

4. Faith is not aloof from practice; prayer is not separate from alms; and a mosque is not empty from revolution and struggle against injustice. The verse says:

“Only he shall maintain the mosques of Allah who believes in Allah and the last Day, and performs the prayer, and pays the alms (zak�t) and fears none but Allah. They, hopefully will be among the guided.” 3

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 19

أَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَآجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَجَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ لاَيَسْتَوُونَ عِندَ اللّهِ وَاللّهُ لايَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

19. ***“Do you make the giving of water to the pilgrims and the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque equal to someone who believes in Allah and the Last Day, and strives in the way of Allah? They are not equal with Allah, and Allah does not guide the unjust people.”***

Abbas, the Prophet’s uncle, and Shaybah, the custodian of Ka‘bah, were boasting to each other. Abbas

boasted of his job which was supplying water for the pilgrimages of the Sacred House, and Shaybah boasted of being the custodian of the Ka'bah.

Ali (as) said that he gloried in the fact that they embraced Islam with the help of his struggle and his sword. Abbas was annoyed and complained of Ali (as) before the Prophet (S). Then, this verse was revealed.

For his precedence, Ali (as) repeatedly called to witness by this verse, because Faith and Holy Struggle were superior to the services done in the age of idolatry which did not bring them spiritual worth. The verse says:

"Do you make the giving of water to the pilgrims and the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque equal to someone who believes in Allah and the Last Day, and strives in the way of Allah?..."

Therefore, a deed without being accompanied by faith is something hollow. It is like a mirage, or as a body without soul.

This fact must be remarked here that sincere strivers are superior to others, although the latter are helpful in a lot of services through some other jobs.

That is why if the true Faithful strivers be compared as equivalent with others, it will be counted as one of the social injustices.

The verse continues saying:

"...They are not equal with Allah, and Allah does not guide the unjust people."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 20

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً عِندَ اللّهِ وَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَآئِزُونَ

20. ***"Those who believed and emigrated, and strove in Allah's way with their properties and their selves, have a greater rank with Allah, and these they are the triumphant."***

As an emphasis and a more explanation, the Qur'ān in this verse indicates that those who believed and embraced Islam and migrated (to Medina) and struggled with their possessions and their selves in the way of Allah, are the highest in rank in the view of Allah, and they are the achievers of salvation. The verse says:

"Those who believed and emigrated, and strove in Allah's way with their properties and their selves, have a greater rank with Allah, and these they are the triumphant."

Explanations

1. In Islam, Faith, migration, and Holy Struggle, like piety, are located at the top of values.

"...have a greater rank..."

2. With some people, the criterion is their tribal and racial relationships, while in the divine reckons, Faith, migration, and Holy Straggle are criterions of values,

(***...with Allah...***).

If all Muslims and the Prophet's companions could gather and sit in a row, the one who believed first (sooner than any other man), and spent the longest time in the battlefields of Islam, where he suffered the strokes, would not be any one save Ali-ibn-i-'Abi Tālib (as).

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 21

يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَرِضْوَانٍ وَجَنَّاتٍ لَهُمْ فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُقِيمٌ

21. ***"Their Lord gives them good news of Mercy from Himself and (His) good pleasure, and of gardens wherein for them are lasting bounties."***

The Qur'ān announces that for these three significant deeds (Faith, migration, and Holy Struggle) Allah will give them three great merits:

1. Their Lord bestows them glad tidings of the vast Mercy from Himself, and makes them enjoy it.

The verse says:

"Their Lord gives them good news of Mercy from Himself..."

2. The Lord will endow them His good pleasure. The verse continues saying:

"...and (His) good pleasure..."

3. In addition to them, He will let them enjoy of gardens in Heaven, and of the bounties which are perpetual and eternal. The verse says:

"...and of gardens wherein for them are lasting bounties."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 22

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَداً إِنَّ اللّهَ عِندَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

22. *“Therein they will abide for ever, verily Allah has a great reward with Him.”*

In order to lay a more emphasis on the previous meaning, the Qur’ān adds:

“Therein they will abide for ever…”

Then, the reason of it is stated that there are some great rewards with Allah which He will remit His servants instead of their good deeds. The verse says:

“…verily Allah has a great reward with Him.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 23

يَآ أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لاتَتَّخِذُوا ءَابَآءَكُمْ وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ عَلَى الإِيمَانِ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِنكُمْ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

23. *“O’ you who have Faith! Do not take your fathers and your brothers for guardians if they prefer unbelief to belief, and whoever of you takes them for a guardian, those – they are the unjust.”*

The last temptation and pretext that might be appear among a group of Muslims in front of the command of war against idol-worshipers was that they thought if they fought against the idolaters, they should renounce their relatives and tribes.

On the other side, their capitals and commerce was mostly in the hands of idolaters. By means of their intercourse into Mecca, the briskness of their market would increase.

On the third side, this group of Muslims had some good and comfortable houses in Mecca which might be destroyed if they fought against idolaters.

This holy verse clearly and decisively answers such persons. At first, it says:

“O’ you who have Faith! Do not take your fathers and your brothers for guardians if they prefer unbelief to belief…”

Then, as an emphasis, it adss:

"...and whoever of you takes them for a guardian, those – they are the unjust."

What an injustice is greater than this that a person, by making friends with disbelivers and joining to the camp of foreigners and the enemies of the Truth, does unjustice both to himself, and to the society which he belongs to, and to the Messenger of Allah (S)?

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 24

قُلْ إِن كَانَ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُم مِنَ اللّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللّهُ لا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

24. ***"Say: 'If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your clan, your possessions that you have gained, commerce you fear may slacken, dwellings you are fond of, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait till Allah brings about His command; and Allah does not guide the transgressing people."***

In this verse, for the extraordinary importance of the subject, the matter under discussion has been stated with a more explanation, emphasis, and threat. It addresses the Prophet (S) and says:

"Say: 'If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your clan, your possessions that you have gained, commerce you fear may slacken, dwellings you are fond of, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait till Allah brings about His command..."

Since the preference of these things to the good pleasure of Allah and Holy Struggle is a kind of disobedience and a manifest transgression, and also having the love of the dazzling glare of the material life is not eligible for the Divine guidance, then, at the end of the verse, the Qur'ān adds:

"...and Allah does not guide the transgressing people."

Whatever is cited in these verses does not mean cutting off the strings of love and friendship with relatives, neglecting the economical properties and abilities, and going toward the abandance of humane affections.

But, the objective meaning is that when it is difficult for a person to decide, the love of wife, child, wealth, rank, home and family should not hinder the execution of Allah's command and tending toward Holy Struggle, so that it detains him from his sacred aim.

Therefore, if the person can decide and choose the way, it is necessary for him to observe both of them.

However, these verses should be taught as a motto to all the Muslims' children, in order that the spirit of

self-sacrifice, devotion and Faith servive in them, and they can guard the religion of Allah and their own heritages.

Thus, Holy Struggle is one of the pillars of Islam which is enjoined beside Unity and prophethood.

"...than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His way..."

Everything should be devoted in the path of the love for Allah and Holy Struggle in His way. And, detestation of wife and children or the appearance of the disturbance in the circumstances of life, can not be taken as a hinder for the fulfilment of the duty of Holy Struggle.

1. Ad-Durr-ul-Manthūr, vol. 3, p. 219
2. In the Qur'ān, the practice of ' alms ' has been mentioned 32 times, 28 of which are recited with the commandment of ' prayer '.
3. For those who haunt mosques, there are many merits mentioned in the Islamic traditions. Among them are: finding friends and brethrens in Faith, useful information, guidance and avoiding sins, obtaining the divine favours and the grace of Allah. (Durr-ul-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 16)

Section 4: Allah's Help at Hunayn

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 25

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنكُمْ شَيْئاً وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الأَرْضُ بِمَا
رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُم مُّدْبِرِينَ

25. *"Certainly Allah has helped you on many fields, and on the day of Hunayn, when your multitude made you vain, but it availed you nothing and the earth, in spite of its breadth, became strait to you; then you turned back in retreat."*

In the previous holy verses, the words were upon the encouragement to Holy Struggle and some warnings due to dependences. Here, the verse recounts a few helps and graces of Allah in order to strengthen the motive of Holy Struggle in Muslims.

As Tafsir Marāqi, a commentary upon the Qur'ān, says, the total battles of the Prophet (S) were numbered 80.

"Certainly Allah has helped you on many fields..."

It has been narrated that once Mutuwakkil-i-'Abbāsi became sick. He vowed he would remit many silver

coins (derham) if he healed. After that, when he gained his health, it was discussed how many coins the amount of ‘many silver coins’ was. They asked the question from Imam Hādi (as) and, relying upon this verse, he said:

“He must remit eighty derhams (silver coins).”[1]

The Feature of the Battle of Hunayn

The Battle of Hunayn happened between the Muslims and a tribe named ‘Hawāzin’ in a land near Tā’if. That was why that this battle was also called ‘the Battle of Hawāzin’.

The people of that locality had planned to attack the Muslims, but to stand against that plot, the Prophet (S) set out the troops of Islam containing two thousand fresh Muslims added to those ten thousand strivers who had formerly conquered Mecca, towards them in 8 A.H.

It was after morning prayer when the Muslims were attacked unawares by the fighters of Hawāzin. Therefore, most of the Muslim strivers run away and the regularity of the army of Islam disturbed.

The verse says:

“...then you turned back in retreat.”

But a group of them resisted very hard and finally, by the Prophet’s call, the fugitives returned and, together with them, their attack began again. Then, by the help of Allah, one hundred pagans were killed and the rest of them surrendered. At last, the Battle of Hunayn ended in favour of the Muslims and they gained a great deal of booties.

“...on the day of Hunayn...”

Concerning to the Battle of Hunayn, there are many things to be said upon the number of captives, the quantity of booties and the quality of their division, the happenings that occurred there, and the consequences of this battle, which can be studied in the related history books and the books compiled about the Battles of Islam.

Thus, sometimes the abundance of persons and material possibilities cause proud and negligence in men, while in all conditions, whether in weakness or strength, the need to the helps of Allah exists. In the Battle of Badr, the Muslims were small in number but they enjoyed the help of Allah.

But, at the beginning of the Battle of Hunayn, where the Muslims were large in number, they defeated and it was after that event when the help of Allah came to them and they, finally, won the battle.

“Certainly Allah has helped you on many fields, and on the day of Hunayn, when your multitude made you vain but it availed you nothing and the earth, in spite of its breadth, became strait to

you; then you turned back in retreat.”

This fact should be noticed, too, that without the Will of Allah, the material means are ineffective, (***“…it availed you nothing…”***), and restructs them spiritually.

“…then you turned back in retreat.”
“Then Allah sent down His tranquility…”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verses 26-27

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ اللّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ جُنُوداً لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَعَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَذَلِكَ جَزَآءُ الْكَافِرِينَ

ثُمَّ يَتُوبُ اللّهُ مِن بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَلَى مَن يَشَآءُ وَاللّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

26. ***“Then Allah sent down His tranquillity upon His Messenger and upon the believers, and sent down hosts which you did not see, and He punished those who disbelieved, and that is the reward of the infidels.”***

27. ***“Then, after that (escape), Allah turns towards whomever He pleases, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”***

The Arabic word /sakinah/ (tranquallity) has been applied in six occurrences of the Qur’ān, five of which relate to battles.

In the Battle of Hunayn, there came four kinds of Divine grace upon the believers from the side of Allah. They were: tranquality, unseen troops, divine violence against pagans, and accepting the repentance of the fugitives (which is mentioned in the following verse).

Some of the pagan captives asked the Muslims:

“*Where are those white clothed troops who killed a number of us?”*

This meaning points to the angels who appeared in white clothing, in the eyes of the pagans.2

However, the unseen helps were the secret of the Muslims’ victory. And, in addition to that, generally, a good spirituality, and having the confidence which is emerged from Faith, are among the main factors of triumph in battles.

Tranquillity and confidence are necessary both for the leader and for the followers. The verse says:

“***Then Allah sent down His tranquality upon His Messenger and upon the believers…”***

The belief in the presence of the angels and the Divine missions for helping the believers in that battle, is a Qur'ānic belief. And, no doubt, for the person who believes in 'origin and end,' being killed in the way of Allah (s.w.t.) is an honour, but for disbelievers it is a torment. The holy verse continues saying.

"...And sent down hosts which you did not see, and He punished those who disbelieved, and that is the reward of the infidels."

Upon the commentary of verse 27, it can be said that the gates of repentance are always open to all persons, even for fugitives and captives. In this course, those sinners will be involved in the forgiveness of Allah who truly feel sorry. It is in this case that Allah not only covers their sins but also loves them. The verse says:

"Then, after that (***escape***)***, Allah turns towards whomever He pleases, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."***

By the way, it should be noticed that the acceptance of repentance is not obligatory for Allah, but it is an excellence which relates to His Own Wisdom.

Explanations

There are some probabilities expressed upon the meaning of the repentance which is mentioned in the verse. They are as follows:

1. Repenting from the sin of escaping from battle-field.

2. Repenting from idolatry.

3. Repenting from pride, and from reliance on the immensity of persons.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 28

يَآ أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلا يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَذَا وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيكُمُ اللّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ إِن شَآءَ إِنَّ اللّهَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

28. ***"O' you who have Faith! The polytheists are indeed unclean, so they shall not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year, and if you fear poverty, then Allah will enrich you out of His grace if He pleases; verily Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."***

One of the four commandments that Ali (as) conveyed to the people of Mecca in the rites of Hajj (pilgrimage) in the ninth year A.H. was that from the year followed no pagan was allowed to enter the Holy Mosque and to circumambulate the Ka'bah. This verse has pointed to this matter and its philosophy. It says:

“O’ you who have Faith! The polytheists are indeed unclean, so they shall not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year…”

Then, in response to those shortsighted persons who said with the absence of pagans in the Sacred Mosque their business and trading would decline and they would become poor and miserable, the Qur’ān says:

“…and if you fear poverty, then Allah will enrich you out of His grace if He pleases…”

And He did enrich them in the best form and, at the age of the Prophet (S) with the spread of Islam, the crowds of pilgrims to the Sacred Mosque started to come toward Mecca, and this circumstance has been being continued up to the present time.

Consequently, Mecca, which was located in a place surrounded by some dry mountains, has been changed into a very much inhabited city and an important center of bargains and tradings.

Finally, at the end of the verse, the Qur’ān adds that Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise; and whatever instruction He commands is according to His Wisdom, and He is perfectly aware of its results. The verse says:

“…verily Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 29

قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لايُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللّهِ وَلا بِالْيَوْمِ الاَخِرِ وَلايُحَرّمُونَ مَاحَرَّمَ اللّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَن يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ

29. ***“Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day, nor do they prohibit, what Allah and His Messenger have prohibited, nor follow the religion of Truth, out of those who have been given the Book until they pay the (Jizyah) tributory tax with their hand and they remain subjected.”***

The words in the former verses were about the duty of the Muslims before idolaters. This verse, and several verses next to it, make manifest the Muslims’ duty before ‘the People of the Book’.

In these verses, in fact, Islam has assigned a series of moderate ordinances to be followed by both the Muslims and disbelievers. From the point of following a heavenly religion, ‘the People of the Book’ are resembled to Muslims, but from another point of view, they are resembled to pagans.

For this very reason, Islam does not permit that they should be killed, while it issued this permission about the idolaters who insisted on their belief, because the program of Islam has been to root out

idolatry from the whole earth.

Islam lets Muslims come to terms with the People of the Book in the case that they agree to have a peaceful life beside Muslims in the form of a safe minority religion, to respect Islam without committing any oppositions and any evil propagation against Muslims and Islam.

One of other signs of their accepting this peaceful life is that they agree to pay Jizyah (capitation tax), which is a kind of poll-tax, and they deliver it to Islamic Government every year.

Otherwise, Islam issues the command of struggling and fighting against them. The reason of this violence is made manifest through three phrases in the verse under discussion.

At first, it says:

"Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day..."

How can it be that the People of the Book, such as the Jews and the Christians, do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, while outwardly we see that they believe in God and the Resurrection both. This is for the sake that their belief is mixed with a great deal of superstitions and so many groundless matters.

Then, the verse points to their second weakness, indicating that they do not accept the prohibitions of Allah. They are polluted with: drinking wines, usury, consuming the flesh of swine, and committing a lot of acts of sexual libertinages. The verse says:

"...nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Messenger have prohibited..."

Finally, the verse refers to their third fault, when it says:

"...nor follow the religion of Truth..."

That is, their religions have been deviated from their essential ways, many of the facts have been forgotten and a mass of superstitions have been substituted in their places.

After mentioning these three qualities, which are, in fact, considered as the permission of fighting against them, the verse continues saying:

"...out of those who have been given the Book..."

Then, the Qur'ān, in a single sentence, states the difference between idolaters and pagans. It says:

"...until they pay the* (*Jizyah*) *tributary tax with their hand and they remain subjected."

What is Jizyah?

It is a kind of Islamic poll-tax which is upon persons, not upon properties and lands. In other words,

Jizyah is a yearly poll-tax.

The main philosophy of this tax is that the defence for integrity, independece, and security of a country is the duty of all members of that country.

Therefore, if a group of people in such a society practically undertake and fulfil that duty, while some others, because of being busy in their own occupations, can not take part in the rows of soldiers, the duty of the second group is that they pay the expenses of the strivers and protectors of the security in the form of a poll-tax every year.

Thus, a poll-tax is simply a kind of financial support which is paid by the People of the Book instead of the responsibility that Muslims undertake with the purpose of supplying security for their lives and properties.

1. Atyab-ul-Bay□n
2. At-Tafsir-us-S□fi

Section 5: The Polytheism of the Jews and the Christians

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 30

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللّهِ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهِؤُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِن قَبْلُ قَاتَلَهُمُ اللّهُ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ

30*. “And the Jews say: ‘Ezra is the son of God’; and the Christians say: ‘The Messiah is the son of God’. That is the utterance of their mouths, conforming with the saying of those who disbelieved before. May Allah destroy them; how they are turned away!”***

The term /‘uzayr/, mentioned in the verse, is the Arabic form of /‘uzr□’/, in the same manner that /‘is□/ is the Arabic form of /yas□’/, and /yahy□/ is the Arabicized form of /y□hanna/.

One of the great scholars of the Jews was called ‘Uzayr. He later was entitled ‘the Jew’, the Deliverer. It happened that after the occurrence of people’s general massacre by Nebuchadnezzar, and destruction of temples, burnt of the Turah, captivity of women and conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, ‘Uzayr went to Cyrus and asked him to equip the Jews with home and means of life.

This verse is a sort of explanation upon the previous verse, which implies that the 'People of the Book' do not believe in Allah and the Last Day.

The similarity of 'the People of the Book' to the idolaters was that idolaters considered idols as the partners of God. This verse points to that similarity:

"…conforming…".

The Jews of the present day, of course, do not believe in 'Uzayr as the son of Allah, but at the time of the Prophet of Islam (S), they had such a notion. They could offer no answer to the Prophet's question when he asked them why they did not believe in Moses as God's son, the rank of whom was higher. The verse says:

"And the Jews say: 'Ezra is the son of God'; and the Christians say: 'the Messiah is the son of God'. That is the utterance of their mouths…"

The creeds of the Jews and the Christians are mixed with superstitions, the root of which is found in the creeds of the ancient pagans. The verse says:

"…conforming with the saying of those who disbelieved before…"

Then, the verse continues saying:

"…May Allah destroy them; how they are turned away!"

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 31

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَاباً مِن دُونِ اللّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَآ أُمِرُوا إِلاَّ لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهاً وَاحِداً لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ سُبْحَانَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

31*. "They have taken their rabbis and their monks and Messiah, son of Mary, as* (*their*) *lords apart from Allah, while they were commanded to worship but One God; there is no god but He; Pure is He and Exalted is He from what they associate* (*with Him*)*."*

The Qur'ānic term /'ahbār/ is the plural form of /hibr/ which means 'scholar, learned'; and the Arabic term /ruhbān/ is the plural form of /rāhib/ with the meaning of 'monk'. These people, with all their saintliness, are servants and worshippers of God, not objects of worship.

Unconditioned obedience from Jewish rabbis and Christian monks is a kind of worship done by the Jews and the Christians. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"Whoever obeys a person in sinning Allah; he has worshipped him."[1]

The verse says:

"They have taken their rabbis and their monks and Messiah, son of Mary, as (their) lords apart from Allah, while they were commanded to worship but One God; there is no god but He..."

Thus, obeying other than Allah unconditionally is a sort of serving other than Allah.

To worship the prophets, exaggerating about them, and considering them as son(s) of God is attributing partners to God. The verse continues saying:

"...Pure is He and Exalted is He from what they associate (with Him)."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 32

يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَيَأْبَى اللّهُ إِلاَّ أَن يُتِمَّ نُورَهُ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ

32. ***"They intend that they extinguish the Light of Allah with their mouths and Allah refuses but to perfect His Light, though the infidels detest it."***

For the vain and useless efforts of the Jews and the Christians, or all the opponents of Islam, among whom are polytheists, there has come an interesting resemblance in this verse. It says:

"They intend that they extinguish the Light of Allah with their mouths and Allah refuses but to perfect His Light..."

Inspite of their wish, Allah intends to spread this Divine Light and to complete it more and more, so that it covers throughout the world and in a manner that all the people of the world enjoy it, although the disbelievers do not like it. The verse continues saying:

"...though the infidels detest it."

There is no meaning seemed more expressive than this to illustrate the degradation and contempt of their attempts. In fact, there will be no result for the efforts of a feable creature before the endless Will and infinite Power of Allah other than this.

For extinguishing a small light, people used to usually blow with their mouths, while a puff of mouth has no effect in extinguishing strong lights. In order to state the weakness of their ability and to break their personality, the Qur'ān has applied ***"...with their mouths..."*** which is of no avail for the strong lights to be extinguished.

The purpose is that these miserable people intend to extinguish the light of Allah with the blow of their mouth, like a person who tries to extinguish the sun with a puff.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 33

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

33. ***"He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of Truth, that He may prevail it over all religions, though the polytheists may detest it."***

At last, by the means of this verse, the Muslims have been given the glad tidings of the spread of Islam through the world. In this way, the Qur'ān has completed the content of the previous verse indicating that the efforts of the opponents of Islam result nothing for them. It explicitly says:

"He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of Truth, that He may prevail it over all religions, though the polytheists may detest it."

The purpose of '***guidance***', mentioned in the verse, is the clear reasoning and manifest evidences which exist in the religion of Islam; and the purpose of the phrase '***religion of Truth***' is the same religion of Islam whose both principles and positive laws are right and, in general, its history, evidences, proofs, consequences and concepts are totally right, too.

Thus, no doubt, the religion whose both contents and documents, reasoning, and history are clear, should finally overcome all former creeds.

With the past of time and development of knowledge, together with the facility of communications, the facts will reveal their true features from behind the curtains of poisonous propaganda and they will remove the hinders that the opponents of the Truth create in its path.

It is in this way that the religion of Truth and the government of Truth will dominate everywhere, though the enemies of the Truth detest it, because their effort is something opposite to the nature of history and against the statutes of creation.

The Qur'ān and the reappearance of Mahdi (as)

The words of the abovementioned verse have exactly been repeated in Surah As-Saff, No. 61, verse 9, and, with a little difference, have occurred in Surah Al-Fath, No. 48, verse 28. The verse informs of a significant happening, the importance of which has caused its repetition. It predicts that Islam will become a worldly religion and it will be practiced everywhere all over the world.

The concept of this verse is the complete triumph of Islam over all the religions in the world. This phrase means that Islam will finally cover the whole earth and will prevail throughout the world.

Upon the commentary of this verse, it has been narrated from Imam Sādiq (as) who said:

*“By Allah, the content meaning of this verse has not happened yet and it will not happen until when the ‘Ghā’im’ (as) reappears. When he reappears there will remain no one to deny Allah, the Great, (throughout the world).”*2

It is also narrated from Imam Bāqir (as) who said:

“Verily whatever (promise) there lies in this verse will happen at the time of the reappearance of Mahdi (as) when there will be no one (on the earth) but confesses the rightfulness of Muhammad (S).”

However, the question of Mahdi (as) and his worldly reappearance has been mentioned in a lot of traditions recorded in the books of both great sects of Islam, so that it is considered as one example among the presuppositions of conviction.

It is narrated from Ali-ibn-i-’Abi Tālib (as) that, at the time of reappearance of Mahdi (as), there will be no house and no town but Islam will arrive into it, whether they like or dislike, and the sound of ‘prayer call’ will be heard in any town.3

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 34

يَآ أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيراً مِنَ الاَحْبَارِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللّهِ وَالَّذِينَ
يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

34. *“O’ you who have Faith! Verily many of the rabbis and monks consume the properties of the people in vanity and bar (them) from Allah’s way. And those who treasure up gold and silver, and do not spend them in the way of Allah; inform them of a painful chastisement.”*

The contents of the former verses were mostly upon the heathenish deeds of the Jews and Christians who believed in a kind of diety for their religious scholars.

This verse implies that not only they have not the rank of diety, but also they have not the eligibility of leading people. The best evidence for this idea is their committing different offenses. The Qur’ān addresses the Muslims and says:

“O’ you who have Faith! Verily many of the rabbis and monks consume the properties of the people in vanity and bar (them) from Allah’s way.

These rabbis and monks used to devour the people’s properties falsely in different forms and without having a lawful permission, as follows:

One of those forms was that they used to conceal some of the facts of the religion of Messiah (as) and Moses (as) in order that people would not convert to the new religion (Islam), which put their interests in

danger and caused their presents to be ceased.

Another thing was that, by bribery from people, they invalidated the right and confirmed falsehood in place of right, and thus they judged falsely in benefit of the cruel and the strong.

One of other ways of gaining their unlawful incomes was that, under the name of ‘selling Paradise’ or ‘forgiving sins’, they took a great deal of money from people.

They used to bar people from Allah’s way by perverting the Divine revelations or concealing them in order to preserve their unlawful gains.

Fitting to the discussion of mammonism of the leaders of both the Jews and the Christians, the Qur’ān mentions a general law due to those who treasure up wealth. It states:

“…And those who treasure up gold and silver, and do not spend them in the way of Allah; inform them of a painful chastisement.”

The abovementioned holy verse has clearly prohibited treasuring up wealth, and commands Muslims to utilize their properties actively in the way of Allah and in a profitable path for Allah’s servants. They should severely avoid treasuring and storing them in a corner so that their wealth would not be applied in the current bargains; otherwise, they must wait for a painful punishment.

This painful punishment is not only the violent retribution of the Resurrection Day, but also it encompasses the hard chastisements of this world which comes forth as a result of disturbing the economical harmony of the society and causing a larger gap between the rich and the poor.

How much of Wealth Is Counted Treasure?

According to many traditions, that which is obligatory to be paid is yearly alms tax, not other than that. Thus, if a person obtains some considerable wealth and regularly pays its Islamic tax, i.e. alms and also its one fifth levy, (khoms), the one will not be included of the meaning of the verse under discussion.

A tradition narrated from the Prophet (S) indicates that when this verse was revealed the circumstance became difficult for the Muslims. They said that by this command none of them could keep anything for the future of their children. Finally, they asked the matter from the Prophet (S), and he said:

“Allah has not enjoined alms-tax save for that the rest of your properties becomes pure for you. So, the law of heritage has been legislated upon the properties which remain after you.”

This statement means that if treasuring up wealth were absolutely prohibited, the law of heritage would be meaningless.

Considering the totality of the concerning traditions upon this subject and together with the holy verse

itself, it is understood that in ordinary conditions, viz. at periods that society is not in an unpleasant or dangerous circumstance and people enjoy an ordinary life, paying alms tax is usually sufficient for the poor and the remaining wealth of such people is not counted 'treasure'.

But at the time of extraordinary conditions, and when it requires that the interests of the Islamic society to be protected, the Islamic government can assign some limitations for treasuring up wealth, or may demand all the stored properties of people to protect the existence of the Islamic society.

Traditions upon Alms

Imam Sādiq (as) said:

"Allah has given you these extra properties in order that you spend them alongside His pleasure, not to hoard up and treasure it up."[4]

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

"Allah has enjoined Alms in the wealth of the rich Muslims as much as to sufficient the poor. Verily Allah will severely reckon and punish them if they do not fulfil their duty."[5]

According to some traditions, when the Expected Mahdi (May Allah hasten his glad advent) reappears, he will control treasures in order to use them all for the miserable people and his religious strives.[6]

Abu Dharr and This Verse

To make a protest against the manner of Mu'āwiyah, 'Uthmān, and the authorities of the government in gathering and treasuring up gold and silver, Abu Dharr, who was one of the close companions of the Prophet (S), repeatedly recited this verse aloud before Mu'āwiyah and then in front of 'Uthmān every morning and evening.

He said that this verse was not allocated only to those who hinder Alms tax, but it encompasses everyone who treasures up wealth.

One of the excellencies of Abu Dharr in his life was that when confronting the governers of his time he used to enjoin right and forbid wrong concerning their vain expenses. His conflict with 'Uthmān was not due to his wealth and position, but it was a protest to a social indecency 'Uthman was committing.

Abu Dharr was frequently exiled because he opposed the wrong style of the government of his time and shouted against the financial method of 'Uthman, Mu'āwiyah's treasuring up unlawful properties, and justifications of Ka'b-ul-'Akhbār.

The details of this meaning are found in the history books of both great sects of Muslims, including: Al-Qadir, vol. 8, p. 335; Al-Minār, the commentary, vol. 10; Tafsir-i-Nūr,vol. 5, p. 46, and so on.

Explanations

1. Not all the scholars and clergies are wicked. The holy verse says:

"O' you who have Faith! Verily many of the rabbis and monks consume the properties of the people in vanity..."

It should be noted that this matter refers to many of them, not all of them. This statement means that there are also some ones among them who do not commit these indecencies. This very idea, that the Qur'ān announces, is a very good evidence that the judgements of the Qur'ān are just. That is why in Surah Al-Mā'idah, No. 5, verse 82, the Qur'ān has admired a group of them.

2. To misuse opportunities and ranks is religiously unlawful, and the greatest danger for clergymen is a financial mischief.

*"...**Consume the properties of the people in vanity and bar** (**them**) **from Allah's way**..."*

3. The mammonism of the scholars and the treasuring up wealth done by the rich causes the wrath of Allah. The verse says:

"...And those who treasure up gold and silver, and do not spend them in the way of Allah; inform them of a painful chastisement."

4. Treasuring up gold, silver and money, and restraining from spending them in charity is a capital sin, because it has been promised punishment for.

5. In Islam, there is no limitation for having a considerable capital, but in gaining it, there are some conditions which should be observed. To spend wealth in a bad way is also unlawful in Islam.

6. Treasuring up wealth is a social calamity, and worse than that is greed, while worse than this is concealing and storing wealth, since it produces a lot of difficulties for the society.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 35

يَوْمَ يُحْمَى عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لأَنْفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَاكُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ

35. ***"On the Day*** (***of Judgment***) ***they*** (***the coins***) ***shall be heated in the Fire of Hell, and therewith their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded,*** (***the angels will tell them***)***: 'This is what you have treasured up for yourselves, therefore taste you now what you were treasuring!'"***

The Retribution of Amassers of Wealth

This holy verse points to one of the chastisements of such people in the next world, where it says:

"On the Day (of Judgment) they (the coins) shall be heated in the Fire of Hell, and therewith their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded…"

It is in that situation that the angels of punishment will tell them that is the same thing that they amassed for themselves in the form of treasures and did not spend it for the deprived in the way of Allah. The verse says:

"…(the angels will tell them): 'This is what you have treasured up for yourselves…"

As a result of their deed, they should taste what they used to treasure and find the evil consequence of it. The verse continues saying:

"…therefore taste you now what you were treasuring!'"

Once more this verse emphasizes on this fact that the deeds of human beings will not vanish. The deeds of persons will remain for the next world where they will incarnate in front of every one and cause his happiness or his toil.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 36

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِندَ اللّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْراً فِي كِتَابِ اللّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَات وَالأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ فَلاَ تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَآفَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَآفَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

36. ***"Verily the number of months with Allah is twelve months in the Book of Allah, (since) the day He created the heavens and the earth, four of them are sacred. That is the established religion. So be you not unjust unto your selves during them. And fight polytheists totally even as they fight you totally, and know that Allah is with the pious ones."***

In view of the fact that in this Surah there have occurred several discussions about fighting against pagans, the Qur'ān refers to one of the rules of an Islamic fight and the Holy Struggle through this verse and the verse after it. It is to hold the Sacred Months in respect. It says:

"Verily the number of months with Allah is twelve months in the Book of Allah, (since) the day He created the heavens and the earth…"

Since the day the solar system was formed in the present shape, there have existed year and month. A year is a complete course of the rotation of the earth around the sun; and a month is a complete course of the rotation of the moon around the earth which happens twelve times in a year.

Then the Qur’ān adds that four months out of these twelve months are sacred, in which any fight and battle are religiously unlawful. It says:

“...four of them are sacred...”

Next to this statement, in order to emphasize on the matter, it says that this religion is fixed and unchangeable. It is not like the wrong customs which Arabs had and, whenever they wished, they would change the place of them. The verse continues saying:

“...That is the established religion...”

It is understood from some Islamic literature that the prohibition of war during these four months were enjoined not only in the divine creed of Abraham (as), but also in the godly religions of the Jews and Christ, as well as the other heavenly religions.

Then the verse implies that during these four months you should not be unjust to your selves and incur the retributions of this world and the punishments of the Hereafter. It says:

“...So be you not unjust unto your selves during them...”

But, since the prohibition of Holy Struggle during these four months might be misused by the enemies of Islam and it would make them bold in attacking the Muslims, through the next phrase, it adds:

“...And fight polytheists totally even as they fight you totally...”

That is, they are infidels, and infidelity and idolatry is the origin of dispersion, yet they fight against you in one single line. It is more eligible for you, the monotheists, to be united against the enemies of Islam and stand firm in a line, like an iron wall, in front of them.

At last, the verse implies that Muslims should know that if they keep from evil and exactly excecute the teachings of Islam, Allah vouches their victory, because Allah is with the pious ones. The verse says:

“...and know that Allah is with the pious ones.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 37

إِنَّمَا النَّسِيءُ زِيَادَةٌ فِي الْكُفْرِ يُضَلُّ بِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُحِلُّونَهُ عَاماً وَيُحَرِّمُونَهُ عَاماً لِيُوَاطِئُوا عِدَّةَ مَاحَرَّمَ اللّهُ فَيُحِلُّوا مَا حَرَّمَ اللّهُ زُيِّنَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ أَعْمَالِهِمْ وَاللّهُ لايَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

37. ***“Verily postponing (of the sacred month) is only an addition unto infidelity whereby the infidels go astray; they allow it (fight) one year and forbid it another year, that they may adjust the number of months Allah has forbidden, thus they allow what Allah has forbidden. The evil of***

their deeds has been made fair seeming to them. And Allah does not guide the unbelieving people."

In this verse, the Qur'n points to a wrong custom which was usually accomplished at the Age of Ignorance. It was customary among them to change the place of sacred months, about which this verse says:

"Verily postponing (***of the sacred month***) ***is only an addition unto infidelity..."*** 7

The reason of this meaning is that, besides their disbelief and 'creedal infidelity', by ignoring this commandment, they also committed 'practical infidelity', and by means of this action, the faithless persons might incure a greater aberration. The verse continues saying:

"...whereby the infidels go astray..."

Then, in the continuation of the verse, the Qur'n implies that they considered one month in a year lawful and in another year they forbade the same month. They did so in order that, as they imagined, they adapted it with the months Allah had assigned. The verse says:

"...they allow it (***fight***) ***one year and forbid it another year, that they may adjust the number of months Allah has forbidden..."***

That is, when they omitted one month of the Sacred Months, they substituted another month in its place, so that the figure 'four' became full.

But, by this ridiculous and hideous action of theirs, they utterly wasted the philosophy of the prohibition of Sacred Months and toyed with the ordinance of Allah for their low desires. Strange! They were very happy and pleased with their own action, because:

"...The evil of their deeds has been made fair seeming to them..."

They used to say that the long peaceful time between two wars, decreased the war skillfulness, therefore, they should light the fire of war.

Allah also leaves to themselves those people who are not worthy to be guided, and does not guide them. The verse says:

"...And Allah does not guide the unbelieving people."

1. Nr-uth-Thaqalayn, the commentary
2. 'Ikml-ud-Din, by Sadq
3. Tafsir-us-Sfi.
4. Tafsir-us-Sfi
5. Tafsir-us-Sfi
6. Muntakhab-ul-'thr, Usl-l-Kfi, vol. 4, p. 61; and many other traditions which are recorded in the books of both great

sects of Muslims, such as: Musnad Ahmad Hanbal, Sahih Bukhāri, the books entitled: Manlā Yahzuruhul-Faghih, Wasā'il-ush-Shi'ah, and 'Amāli by Shaykh-i-Tūsi

7. Lexicologists has rendered the Arabic term /nasi'/ into the sense of 'changing the place', or ' postponing'. As they say, this word is used for postponing the menstruation of women from its time, or postponing the death of a person, and postponing the months wherein fight is unlawful. (Lisān-ul-Arab, vol. 1, p. 166; and Majma'-ul-Bayān, vol. 5, p. 44)

Section 6: The Tabuk Expedition

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 38

يَآ أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَا لَكُمْ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمُ انْفِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ اثَّاقَلْتُمْ إِلَى الاَرْضِ أَرَضِيتُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الاَخِرَةِ فَمَا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي الأَخِرَةِ إِلاَّ قَلِيلٌ

38. ***"O' you who have Faith! What (excuse) have you that when it is said to you: 'Go forth in Allah's way', you should incline heavily to the ground? Are you contented with the life of this world instead of the Hereafter? But the enjoyment of the life of this world, compared with the Hereafter, is but little."***

Occasion of Revelation

It has been narrated by Ibn-'Abbās, as well as some others, that this verse and the verse after it have been sent down about the 'Battle of Tabūk'.

Some Islamic narrations indicate that the Prophet of Islam (S) usually did not make manifest the war decisions and his final aims concerning them for Muslims before the beginning of war in order that the Islamic martial secrets would not be handed to the enemy.

But, the situation was different about 'the Battle of Tabūk, where in advance he announced clearly that they were going to fight against the Romans. That fight against the Emperor of Eastern Byzantine, of course was not a simple matter, and Muslims should be completely prepared for that great war.

In addition to that, the distance between Medina and the country of the Romans was very long and, all things apart, it was summer, the hot season, and the time of harvest for both corns and fruits.

All these affairs with together made the problem of going toward the battlefield extraordinary difficult for the Muslims, so much so that some of them showed hesitation in accepting the Prophet's invitation.

It was in those circumstances that these couple of verses were sent down and, with a very sharp and decisive tone, warned Muslims to be aware of danger, and made them ready to participate in that great

war.

As it was cited in the occasions of revelation, the abovementioned verse is about the circumstance of the Battle of Tabūk.

Tabuk is a region between Medina and Syria where the bound of Sa‘ūdi Arabia is located now, and, at that time, it was close to the lands of the Emperor of Eastern Byzantine, which was dominated over Syria. This event happened in the ninth A.H. viz. about one year after the occurrence of Mecca Conquest.

With the most intensive manner, the Qur’ān invites people unto Holy Struggle. Sometimes it applies some encouraging words, and sometimes some scorning words, and sometimes it threatens them. It addresses people differently and through various ways in order to make them ready. Here, in this verse, at first it says:

“O’ you who have Faith! What (***excuse***) ***have you that when it is said to you. ‘Go forth in Allah’s way’, you should incline heavily to the ground?...”***

Then, with a reproaching tone, and, referring to the life of this fleeting world and also the vast eternal life in the coming world, it says:

“...Are you contented with the life of this world instead of the Hereafter?...”

Did you do it while the advantages and the amount of the life of this world in comparison with the life in Hereafter is very little? The verse says:

“...But the enjoyment of the life of this world, compared with the Hereafter, is but little.”

How might a wise person submit such a detrimental exchange? And how does he lose an extraordinary worthy thing for reaching to a worthless little thing?

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 39

إِلاَّ تَنْفِرُوا يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَاباً أَلِيماً وَيَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْماً غَيْرَكُمْ وَلا تَضُرُّوهُ شَيْئاً وَاللّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

39*. **“If you do not go forth, He will chastise you with a painful chastisement, and He will substitute in your place a people other than you, and you will not harm Him anything, for Allah is All-Powerful over everything.”***

Then, the Qur’ān promotes the reproaching tone higher into an earnest form of threat and implies that if Muslims do not move towards the battlefields of Holy Struggle, Allah will punish them with a painful punishment. The verse says:

“If you do not go forth, He will chastise you with a painful chastisement...”

So, if they think that by their going aside and turning their backs to the battlefields the wheels of the development of Islam may stop and the light of the religion of Allah will tend to be extinguished, they are in a tremendous error, because Allah can substitute a group of people other than them who will be faithful, decided, and obedient to the command of Allah. The verse says:

“...and He will substitute in your place a people other than you...”

These people will be a group of persons who are different from them from any point of view. They will be different from them not only from the view point of personality, but also from the view points of faith, decision, courage, and obedience.

Some commentators believe that this holy phrase is an indication to Iranians or people of Yemen.[1]

Then the verse adds that, by this way, they can not harm anything unto Allah and His pure religion. The verse continues saying:

“...and you will not harm Him anything, for Allah is All-Powerful over everything.”

This is a reality, not an imaginary utterance, nor an afar hope, because Allah (s.w.t.) is powerful over everything and whenever He will upon the triumph of His pure religion, no doubt, it will happen. The verse ends:

“...for Allah is All-Powerful over everything.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 40

إِلاَّ تَنصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لاتَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنْزَلَ اللّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَى وَكَلِمَةُ اللّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا وَاللّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

40. ***“If you do not help him, yet Allah has helped him already, when those who disbelieved expelled him, he was the second of the two, when they both were in the cave, when he said unto his companion: ‘Do not grieve, surely Allah is with us’. Then Allah sent down on him His tranquillity and strengthened him with hosts which you did not see, and He made the word of those who disbelieved the lowest; and the word of Allah is the highest, and Allah is the Mighty, the Wise.”***

This verse contains a hint to the dangerous plan of polytheists for slaying the Prophet (S). In the event of the Night fixed for the execution of the Conspiracy, every tribe sent a vigorous person ready to stab at him.

They decided to attack at night and slay the Prophet (S). He put Ali-ibn-Abi T￿lib (as) in bed instead of himself and, by night, he went towards the Cave of Th￿r accompanied with Ab￿-Bakr.

The pagans chased the Prophet (S) as far as the threshould of the Cave, but, seeing the spider's webs at the gate of the Cave, they changed their mind and returned.

Thus, after three days staying there, the Prophet (S) left for Medina. During that time, Ab￿-Bakr's slave, '￿mir-ibn-Fahrah, brought food for them. At the same time, Ali (as) was preparing the necessities of traveling to Medina.

After three days, three camels were supplied ready at the Cave and the Prophet (S), Ab￿-Bakr, and a guide started for Medina.2

Therefore, Allah's helps in the past are some admonitions for today; and if they do not help the religion of Allah, He helps His Messenger even by sending spider's webs. The verse says:

"If you do not help him, yet Allah has helped him already, when those who disbelieved expelled him, he was the second of the two, when they both were in the cave, when he said unto his companion: 'Do not grieve, surely Allah is with us'. Then Allah sent down on him His tranquillity and strengthened him with hosts which you did not see..."

Of course, the Will of Allah is superior to and higher than any decisions and desires. The verse says:

"...and the word of Allah is the highest..."

And, the transgressive forces, with all their specializations and possibilities, will be impotent before the true believers who have tranquillity and certainty. The holy verse says:

"...and He made the word of those who disbelieved the lowest; and the word of Allah is the highest, and Allah is the Mighty, the Wise."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 41

انفِرُوا خِفَافاً وَثِقَالاً وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

41. ***"Go forth light and heavy! and strive in Allah's way with your possessions and your selves, this is better for you if you know."***

The objective meaning of the Arabic couple of words: /xif￿f/ and /￿iq￿l /, mentioned in the verse, is either of the following opposite terms: 'light and heavy', 'bachelor and married', 'poor and rich', 'on horseback and on foot', 'young and old', 'to have a large family and to have a small family', 'of ease and of discomfort' and 'trade and farming'.

It is cited in Fi-Zil�l, a commentary of the Qur'�n, that when some old persons such as: 'Ab�-'Ayy�b'Ans�ri, Miqd�d, and Ab�-Talhah, who became ready to go towards the battle-fields, were told that they were too old to go to fight, they often recited the abovementioned verse.

However, when the command of general mobilization for battlefield is issued, do not pretext any barrier. The verse says:

"Go forth light and heavy!..."

And do know that everything should be devoted to the religion, including wealth and life, not only either of them. The verse continues saying:

"...And strive in Allah's way with your possessions and your selves, this is better for you if you know."

Therefore, striving with life for the poor and striving with both wealth and life for the rich is obligatory.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 42

لَوْ كَانَ عَرَضاً قَرِيباً وَسَفَراً قَاصِداً لاَتَّبَعُوكَ وَلَكِن بَعُدَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الشُّقَّةُ وَسَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللّهِ لَوِ اسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا مَعَكُمْ يُهْلِكُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَاللّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

42. ***"Had there been a near gain, and an easy journey, certainly they would have followed you, but the distance was too far to them; yet they will swear by Allah: 'Had we been able, we would certainly have gone out with you', they destroy themselves. And Allah knows that verily they are liars."***

The Qur'�n refers this meaning to the lazy persons who are weak in faith and resort to kinds of pretext in order to refrain from attending in this great course.

The Qur'�n says to the Prophet (S) that if there was an available booty and the journey was short they would accept his invitation and hasten to sit at that prepared table, so that they could reach the worldly material. It says:

"Had there been a near gain, and an easy journey, certainly they would have followed you..."

But, now that the way is very far and difficult for them, they act listlessly and seek pretexts. The verse continues saying:

"...but the distance was too far to them..."

It is surprising that they did not suffice to pretexts, but they would come to the Prophet (S) and swear by

Allah that if they could they would certainly had gone out with the Prophet (S). Therefore, they expressed that the reason that they did not come forth was their incapability and lack of power. The holy verse continues saying:

"...yet they will swear by Allah: 'Had we been able, we would certainly have gone out with you'..."

In fact, by means of these deeds and telling those lies, they destroyed themselves. The verse says:

"...they destroy themselves..."

But Allah knows well that they are not truthful. The verse says:

"...And Allah knows that verily they are liars."

They are completely capable to act but since the table is not so rich and there is a difficult program in front of them, they resort to false oaths.

This circumstance was not confined to the Battle of Tabūk and the age of the Prophet (S). In any society, there are often some lazy, or 'hypocritic and greedy' persons who are always waiting for the moments of victory and efficacious opportunities to come.

At that time, they often substitute themselves deceitfully in the first line and shout to introduce themselves to others that they are the first strivers, the best strugglers, and the most sympathetic people, in order that they enjoy the consequences of the existing triumph without incurring any trouble.

1. Majma'-ul-Bayān.
2. Narrated from Durr-ul-Manthūr

Section 7: The Hypocrites

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 43

عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنكَ لِمَ أَذِنتَ لَهُمْ حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَتَعْلَمَ الْكَاذِبِينَ

43. ***"May Allah pardon you! Why did you give them leave before you had found out those who spoke the truth and before you had known the liars?"***

Try to Recognize Hypocrites

It is understood from the tone and style of these verses that some hypocrites came to the Prophet (S) and, after expressing some excuses, and even taking oaths, they asked him permission that they would not take part in the battlefield of Tab�k. So, the Prophet (S) gave permission to that group.

In this verse, Allah addresses His Messenger kindly, in a manner that, before severity in statement, His words are about remittal and forgiveness. Then the Qur'�n implies why he did not permit that those who spoke the truth be recognized from the liars and he would distinguish them. The verse says:

"May Allah pardon you! Why did you give them leave before you had found out those who spoke the truth and before you had known the liars?"

Is the abovementioned reproof and blame, which has been combined with the announcement of Allah's forgiveness, an evidence for that the Prophet's permission had been an offense, or it had been only a 'leaving the better'?

This question may be answered that the mentioned 'reproof and blame' has a metaphorical form and there has not been even a 'leaving the better' in the course, and the purpose has been to state the hypocritical spirit of the hypocrites in a delicate and metaphorical statement.

This meaning can be made clear by mentioning an explicit example.

Suppose a cruel person intends to beat your son, but at the same time one of your friends stops him of doing that action. Regarding that, not only you will not be inconvenient but also you will become happy.

Yet, to prove the inward indecency of that person, you may tell your friend, in a form of reproof and blame, why he did not let him beat and all people around there would recognize that cruel hypocritical person. Your aim from this statement is only to prove his cruelty and hypocrisy which has been appeared in the guize of 'reproof and blame' unto your friend and your advocate.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 44

لا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ أَن يُجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ

44*. "Those who believe in Allah and the Last Day do not ask you for leave, (to be exempt) from striving with their possessions and their selves; and Allah is All-Knowing of the pious ones."*

A true believer, who loves Holy Struggle and martyrdom, has no fear from death. Therefore, he does not go after taking permission to get a leave.

Sometimes it happened that some Muslims persistently asked the Prophet (S) to send them to fight, but

he had not the necessary possibilities, and, therefore, they wept. [1]

In going to Tabūk, when the Messenger of Allah (S) left Ali (as) in Medina as his substitute, he (as) did not feel at home. The Prophet (S) conforted him and told him that he (as) was, in situation to him (S), as Aaron was to Moses (as).

Thus, the true believers and true strivers do not flee from labour and tasks concerning Holy Struggle, and they devote both with their wealth and selves.

Therefore, a believer is always prepared and ready to obey the Divine commandment. He does not seek for pretexts. So the faith in 'origin and end' is the main factor of piety, love of martyrdom, and attending in Holy Struggles. The holy verse says:

"Those who believe in Allah and the Last Day do not ask you for leave, (to be exempt) from striving with their possessions and their selves..."

Then, it is by means of this manner that a pious person can be recognized at the time of war and in battlefields, not at home and during the time of peace. The verse continues saying:

"...and Allah is All-knowing of the pious ones."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 45

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ لاَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَارْتَابَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِي رَيْبِهِمْ يَتَرَدَّدُونَ

45. *"Only those ask leave from you who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day and their hearts are in doubt, so they waver in their doubt."*

Those who, in the course of the Battle of Tabūk, came to the Prophet (S) and asked him to stay at home, were the very hypocrites and some Muslims of a weak faith, else those believers whose faith was safe and complete and did believe in Allah and the Resurrection Day never asked permission from the Prophet (S) to offend upon the subject of Holy Struggle.

It is understood from this verse that such believers were so obedient to the Prophet's command that they would never say anything against the question of Holy Struggle and participated in it by their properties and selves without any hesitation, and Allah was aware of the circumstances of those pious ones.

Only those disputed upon the question of Holy Struggle who were weak in their belief, or were hypocrites, and had not a proper faith in Allah and the Resurrection Day.

Such people came to the Prophet (S) and, by some vain excuses and pretexts, they asked permission from Him not to take part in the Holy Struggle. Concerning these people, the Qur'ān announces that

their hearts are in doubt and they have not reached to a conclusive belief, then they are bewildered in their own doubt and hesitation. The verse says:

"Only those ask leave from you who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day and their hearts are in doubt, so they waver in their doubt."

Hadrat Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) in one of his sayings has cited:

"...and he who waves in doubt, Satans trample him under their feet." 2

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 46

وَلَوْ أَرَادُوا الْخُرُوجَ لأَعَدُّوا لَهُ عُدَّةً وَلَكِن كَرِهَ اللّهُ انْبِعَاثَهُمْ فَثَبَّطَهُمْ وَقِيلَ اقْعُدُوا مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ

46. ***"And if they had intended to go forth, they would have certainly provided equipment for it, but Allah was averse to their going forth, so He withheld them and it was said (to them): 'Sit you with the sedentary!'"***

These very hypocrites, who came to the Prophet (S) and asked him to give them permission not to participate in the Holy Struggle, had formerly decided not to go to the Holy Struggle and that asking permission was an external action which was done formally, since whether the Prophet (S) gave them permission or not, they would not go to fight.

The same matter, from their situation, is stated through this verse. It says:

"And if they had intended to go forth, they would have certainly provided equipment for it..."

They never provided any preliminary preparations for their going out, and the very thing indicated that they were not decided to go forth.

After that, the verse points to an important matter denoting that, as a result of their intention and their action, Allah basically was not pleased with their participation in the Holy Struggle. So, He cast this idea into their hearts that they would stay at home and refrain going forth.

Therefore, they were told to remain in Medina with those who had not taken part in the Holy Struggle such as children, women, and the sick. The verse says:

"...but Allah was averse to their going forth, so He withheld them and it was said (to them): 'Sit you with the sedentary!'"

However, the averse of Allah to their going forth toward Holy Struggle is a negation of Divine succor, not a practical prohibition.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 47

لَوْ خَرَجُوا فِيكُمْ مَا زَادُوكُمْ إِلاَّ خَبَالاً وَلأَوْضَعُوا خِلاَلَكُمْ يَبْغُونَكُمُ الْفِتْنَةَ وَفِيكُمْ سَمَّاعُونَ لَهُمْ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ

47. ***"Had they gone forth among you, they would not have increased to you aught save corruption, and they would have certainly hurried about*** (*to and fro*) ***amidst you, seeking to stir up sedition between you; and some of you would listen to them; and Allah is All-Knowing of the unjust."***

In this holy verse, the Qur'ān explains that if they came out with you and took part in the Holy Struggle they would be a boaring for you and they would do naught but corruption and sedition.

They might penetrate inside your rows and substitute themselves deceitfully amongst you being busy with disturbances; and there are some persons among you who follow them and hearken to their seditious statements.

Therefore, if they had come they would have created sedition and disturbance in the groups of the Muslims. The holy verse says:

"Had they gone forth among you, they would not have increased to you aught save corruption, and they would have certainly hurried about (*to and fro*) ***amidst you, seeking to stir up sedition between you; and some of you would listen to them…"***

By means of their evil speeches, they would pervert the weak Muslims from the straight path and would create a gap and separation in the troops of Islam, so that the troops' spirit could be weakened. Then, the verse continues saying that Allah is aware of the unjust; i.e. He knows all their plots. The verse says:

"…and Allah is All-Knowing of the unjust."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 48

لَقَدِ ابْتَغَوُا الْفِتْنَةَ مِن قَبْلُ وَقَلَّبُوا لَكَ الأُمُورَ حَتَّى جَآءَ الْحَقُّ وَظَهَرَ أَمْرُ اللّهِ وَهُمْ كَارِهُونَ

48. ***"They certainly sought to stir up sedition already before, and turned matters upside down for you, until the truth came and Allah's command appeared though they were averse."***

These hypocrites had given their examination before. They had cast sedition among the Muslims.

Therefore, the Qur'ān refers to the course of the Battle of 'Uhud where the hypocrites, under the leadership of 'Abdullah-ibn-'Ubay, struck the Muslims very violently and hindered a large group of them

from participating in the Holy Struggle.

They not only did not go to war themselves, but also caused some Muslim tribes to become doubtful about it. These tribes were such as Ban–Muslimah, and Ban–Harithah. They, as a result of the hypocrites' preachings, hesitated to go to fight in the Holy Struggle, but soon they overcame to their doubt and participated in the Holy Struggle.

The following holy verse from Surah'l–i–'Imrn is a hint to that very circumstance. It says:

"When two parties of you had decided to flinch but Allah was the protector of them both** (**and helped them to change their thought**)**; so in Allah** (**alone**) **should the believers trust." 3

It is for this reason that, in the verse under discussion, the Qur'n states that the hypocrites had decided from before to stir up sedition and they tried to turn the matters upside down for the Prophet (S) in order that he might make mistake in making his decisions.

But the truth came and Allah's command was manifested while they were not pleased. That is, in that very Battle of'Uhud that they applied their seditions, the Muslims, after incurring a failure, finally overcame the enemy, and Islam obtained a better situation and it was fixed. The hypocrites, of course, did not like that circumstance. The verse says:

"They certainly sought to stir up sedition already before, and turned matters upside down for you, until the truth came and Allah's command appeared though they were averse."

Yes, hypocrites' hearts never submit to the Islamic system, ***"...they were averse.",*** but as it was actually proved, the helps of Allah destroy the plans of the hypocrites:

"...the truth came and Allah's command appeared...".

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 49

وَمِنْهُم مَن يَقُولُ ائْذَن لِي وَلا تَفْتِنِّي أَلاَ فِي الْفِتْنَةِ سَقَطُوا وإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمحِيطَةٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ

49*. "And among them there is he who says: 'Give me leave and do not tempt me.' Surely into temptation have they already fallen; and verily Hell encompasses the infidels."*

One of the chiefs of the tribe Bany Salamah, who was one of the hypocrites, asked the Messenger of Allah (S) not to attend in the Battle of Tabk. His pretext was that if he saw the Roman women, he would be enamoured of them and would commit sins.

The Holy Prophet (S) allowed him so. Then, this verse was revealed and counted him sinful and fallen in temptation for the sake of not participating in the battlefield. The Prophet (S) resigned him from his rank,

the presidency of the tribe, and appointed Bushr-ibn-Bur’□’, a generous and good tempered man, in his place.

However, for believers, a battlefield is the site of temptation and examination, and those who are worried about the temptation of war and avoid going toward Holy Struggle, will fall into a greater temptation. The verse says:

“And among them there is he who says: ‘Give me leave and do not tempt me.’ Surely into temptation have they already fallen…”

To deceive the believers, some of hypocrites abuse the religious matters and ordinances and, under the name of, for example, ‘looking at the Roman girls’, disobey the command of Allah and the Messenger.

It should be noted that escape from the Divine trial is impossible; and encompassment of Hell upon infidels and hypocrites is for the encompassment of Hell upon infidels and hypocrites is for the encompassment of sin upon their entity. The verse continues saying:

“…and verily Hell encompasses the infidels.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 50

إِن تُصِبْكَ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِن تُصِبْكَ مُصِيبَةٌ يَقُولُوا قَدْ أَخَذْنَآ أَمْرَنَا مِن قَبْلُ وَيَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ فَرِحُونَ

50*. “If* (*any*) *good befalls you, it vexes them; but if an affliction visits you, they say: ‘We had taken care of our affair in advance’, and they turn away, rejoicing.”***

In this verse, the Qur’□n refers to one of other particular epithets of the hypocrites. This epithet in them is that if a goodness befalls the Prophet (S) and Muslims, they will be annoyed of it. They will be inconvenient if the Prophet (S) overcomes the enemy in the war or obtains some booties.

They do not like the goodness and happiness of the Muslims, but if an affliction befalls the Muslims, that they meet with failure or be killed, for example, they will be glad and they say that they had observed the necessary precautions from before and they did not visit that affliction. In such a way, they speak ironically of Muslims. The verse says:

“If* (*any*) *good befalls you, it vexes them; but if an affliction visits you, they say: ‘We had taken care of our affair in advance’, and they turn away, rejoicing.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 51

قُل لَن يُصِيبَنَآ إِلاَّ مَاكَتَبَ اللّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلاَنَا وَعَلَى اللّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

51. ***"Say: 'Never shall afflict us*** **(*anything*)** ***save what Allah has prescribed for us; He is our Master; and on Allah should the believers rely'."***

The leader of a community and the community itself are partners with each other in sorrows and joys.

We are commissioned to our duties, not sureties to their results. We go forth in Holy Struggle, but determinations are with Allah. The verse says:

"Say: 'Never shall afflict us **(*anything*)** ***save what Allah has prescribed for us…"***

Whatever Allah prescribes for a believing servant is good, since never does a master prescribe some bad things for his servant.

A believer lives under the mastership of Allah (s.w.t.); and the highest peak of monotheism is to run alongside the orbit of Divine Law, and also leaving the fate to the Will of Allah, the Wise. It says:

"…He is our Master…"

On Allah (s.w.t.) alone should a believer rely, because the condition of Faith is relying on Allah. The verse says:

"…and on Allah should the believers rely'."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 52

قُلْ هَلْ تَرَبَّصُونَ بِنَآ إِلاَّ إِحْدَى الْحُسْنَيَيْنِ وَنَحْنُ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمْ أَن يُصِيبَكُمُ اللّهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِنْ عِندِهِ أَوْ بِأَيْدِينَا فَتَرَبَّصُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُتَرَبِّصُونَ

52. ***"Say: 'Do you await for us but one of the two excellences? And we await for you that Allah will afflict you with punishment from Himself or by our hands. So await; we*** **(*too*)** ***are awaiting with you'."***

This verse addresses the Prophet (S) to convey this answer to them, too, that whether they expect to reach Muslims one of the two goodnesses, victory or martyrdom. The verse says:

"Say: 'Do you await for us but one of the two excellences?…"

Muslims either defeat the enemy in the war and come out from the battlefield victoriously, or they will be killed and drink the glass of martyrdom honestly. Whatever comes forth welcomes, and it is the cause of their honour and the light of Muslims' eyes. There will be, however, no failure in their policy.

But, on the contrary, concerning the opponents, Muslims await for them one of the two afflictions. Either they meet the punishment from Allah both in this world and the next world, or Muslims make them

contemptible and destroy them by their hands.

The verse says:

"...And we await for you that Allah will afflict you with punishment from Himself or by our hands..."

Now that the status is like that, both parties may await with each other. The verse continues saying:

"...So await; we (too) are awaiting with you'."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 53

قُلْ أَنفِقُوا طَوْعاً أَوْ كَرْهاً لَن يُتَقَبَّلَ مِنكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ قَوْماً فَاسِقِينَ

53. ***"Say: 'Spend willingly or unwillingly, it shall never be accepted from you; (for) verily you have ever been an ungodly people."***

Those hypocrites who did not participate in the Battle of Tabūk, desired to share the Battle in its victory by means of their financial helps.

But, the condition of deeds to be accepted by Allah is piety and sincerity, because the political and social affairs and divine services are all related to each other. Thus the spirits, innates, and intentions of persons are effective in the value of their deeds.

That hypocrite who is inconvenient of triumph for Muslims and is happy when an affliction reaches them, his deeds are worthless with this polluted innate. So, such hypocrites, who instead of going forth to battlefields intend to expend financially, are told that their action, done willingly or unwillingly, is of no avail. The verse says:

"Say: 'Spend willingly or unwillingly, it shall never be accepted from you; (for) verily you have ever been an ungodly people."

Charity, of course, is not limited to the act of satiating people with food, the improvement of minds and spiritual growth is also the goal of Islam.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 54

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَن تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقَاتُهُمْ اِلاَّ أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللّهِ وَبِرَسُولِهِ وَلا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلاَةَ إِلاَّ وَهُمْ كُسَالَى وَلا يُنفِقُونَ إِلاَّ وَهُمْ كَارِهُونَ

54. ***"And naught prevented that their spendings should be accepted from them, save that they have disbelieved in Allah and in his Messenger, and they do not perform the prayer but while they are sluggish, and they do not spend but while they are averse."***

In this verse, the Qur'ān explains once more the reason of refusing the expenses of the hypocrites. It says:

"And naught prevented that their spendings should be accepted from them, save that they have disbelieved in Allah and in his Messenger..."

Then, any action, which is not done with the belief in Allah, will not be accepted with Him.

Thus, the incomes of an Islamic government, comparing with the incomes of other governments, such as Khoms (one fifth levy), alms, and charities, which believing people pay heartily and with a great deal of sincerity, have some peculiarities and privileges as follows:

1. They pay it willingly, based on their own choice and upon their religious conscience.

2. They pay it with no fear, but accompanied by intention with divine motive.

3. They count the financial expendings as some provisions for the Hereafter.

4. They choose a just scholar among jurisprudents to give him their wealth.

5. They usually know how that spending is used and they often control it.

6. The condition of the simple life of the taker of it is considered by them. So, they usually kiss his hand and thank Allah (s.w.t.).

The verse, after mentioning the refusal of the hypocrites' financial expendings, refers to the situation of their worships. It says:

"...and they do not perform the prayer but while they are sluggish..."

This is the state of their prayer, then, similar to that, their spending is also done forcedly and with aversion. The verse continues saying:

"...and they do not spend but while they are averse."

In fact, their spendings are not accepted for two reasons. One reason is that their action is performed with infidelity and lack of faith; and the second reason is that it is done forcedly and with aversion.

Also, their prayer is not accepted for two reasons: the first is their infidelity, and the second is that it is performed sluggishly.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 55

فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلاَ أَوْلاَدُهُمْ إِنَّما يُرِيدُ اللّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُم بِهَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ

55*. “So let not their possessions and their issues astonish you; verily Allah only desires thereby to chastise them in the life of* (*this*) *world, and that their souls depart while they are infidels.”*

Some of the hypocrites had both a great deal of wealth, and many children. This status caused the surprise of some Muslims. They might think with themselves how those hypocrites, that did not believe in Allah, had enjoyed so many bounties.

In this verse, it is said to the Prophet (S) and all the Muslims that they would not surprise of the abundance of the hypocrites' wealth and children. That is, they should not imagine that those bounties might cause happiness and comfort for them.

But, on the contrary, those properties and children caused them affliction and punishment. Therefore, the hypocrites and infidels, because of absence of belief in Allah (s.w.t.), which is the origin of the ease of hearts, can not apply those bounties with a pleasure.

Sometimes these bounties are the sources of worriment, anxiety, and spiritual torments for them. For the sake of possessing some more possibilities, they think they are free from want. This very imagination causes them to disobey most of divine commandments and take distance more and more from Allah (s.w.t.) and from believing in Him.

The verse says:

“So let not their possessions and their issues astonish you; verily Allah only desires thereby to chastise them in the life of* (*this*) *world, and that their souls depart while they are infidels.”

Therefore, if wealth and children are purified and righteous, they are some good merits which cause happiness, comfort, and ease. But if the wealth is not purified and the children are impious, they will be a painful torment for their holders.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 56

وَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللّهِ إِنَّهُمْ لَمِنكُمْ وَمَا هُمْ مِنكُمْ وَلَكِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَفْرَقُونَ

56*. “And they swear by Allah that they are most surely of you, while they are not of you. But they are a people that are afraid.”*

The Arabic term /yafraq□n/, used in the abovementioned verse, means the intense of fear. As if their hearts burst from fear.

One of the means of hypocrites, which they applied frequently, was ‘a false oath’. That is why we should not haste in accepting the repentance of a hypocrite and believing his claims, because hypocrites are liars. The verse says:

“And they swear by Allah that they are most surely of you, while they are not of you. But they are a people that are afraid.”

However, heartily fear and terror are among the signs of hypocrites.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 57

لَوْ يَجِدُونَ مَلْجَأً أَوْ مَغَارَاتٍ أَوْ مُدَّخَلاً لَوَلَّوْا إِلَيْهِ وَهُمْ يَجْمَحُونَ

57*. “If they* (*the hypocrites*) *could find a refuge, or caves or a place to enter therein, they would certainly turn thereto, running away in all haste.”*

The Arabic word /malja’/, mentioned in this verse, means ‘refuge’, and the term /maq□r□t/ is the plural form of /maq□rah/ which means ‘cave’. The word /madxal/ in Arabic is rendered as ‘a hidden way like a tunnel under the ground’.

The Qur’□nic term /yajmah□n/ is derived from /jim□h/ in the sense of ‘a swift running which can not be stopped’. In Arabic, a vicious horse is also called /jam□h/.

Hypocrites express faith either because of fear or because of coveting wealth and rank. The abovementioned verse refers to the first group.

A hypocrite is often frightened and seeks for opportunity to escape from the existing situation.

The life of hypocrites is always scattered and roaming about. They lead a compulsory life with the Muslims, since they are in fear from their own deed. The verse says:

“If they* (*the hypocrites*) *could find a refuge, or caves or a place to enter therein, they would certainly turn thereto, running away in all haste.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 58

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَلْمِزُكَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا مِنْهَا رَضُوا وَإِن لَّمْ يُعْطَوْا مِنهَآ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْخَطُونَ

58. ***"And some of them find fault with you regarding to the (distribution of) alms; so if they are given from them, they are pleased, and if they are not given from them, they are enraged."***

The Qur'ānic term /lumaz / means 'to find fault in front of a person', while the term /humaz/ means 'to find fault at the back of a person'.

That person who later became the leader of Kharijites (Khawārij) and the apostates (Māriqin), when the booties of the Battle of Hunayn were being distributed, he protested the Prophet (S) and told him to behave justly.

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

"Who is better in justice than I?"

At that time 'Umar was going to kill the man for that undue insolence. But the Prophet (S) said that they let him go, and added that he would have some followers who would have such worships that the audience, comparing their worships with them, might count theirs naught. (This statement was a hint to their dry worships without mastership.)

With those plenty of worships, they exceeded the religion and went out of the bounds of Islam, like an arrow when it goes out of the bow. That person was killed in the Battle of Nahrawān by the sword of Hazrat Ali (as).

However, hypocrites look only at their own interests. Then, if they are given a share of bounties, they will be pleased and happy, and count the distributer a just person even though they do not deserve it.

But, if they are given naught from those interests, they will become angry, and accuse the distributer to injustice. The verse says:

"And some of them find fault with you regarding to the (distribution of) alms; so if they are given from them, they are pleased, and if they are not given from them, they are enraged."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 59

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا مَآءَاتَاهُمُ اللّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا اللّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ وَرَسُولُهُ إِنَّآ إِلَى اللّهِ رَاغِبُونَ

59. ***"And if they were content with what Allah and His Messenger gave them and they said: 'Allah is sufficient for us; Allah will soon give us (more) out of His grace, and His Messenger too. Verily unto Allah do we eagerly turn'."***

There are four stages referred to in this verse:

1) Being content with the Decree of Allah and submitted to it.

"And if they were content with what Allah and His Messenger gave them..."

2) Oral Expression of content uttered by the tongue of the person.

"...and they said: 'Allah is sufficient for us..."

3) Being hopeful of the grace, bounteousness and beneficence of Allah.

"...Allah will soon give us (more) out of His grace, and His Messenger too..."

4) Being heedless to the world, and having the love of Allah (s.w.t.).

"...Verily unto Allah do we eagerly turn'."

Hypocrites are never content with Allah's predestinations, but the goodness of man lies in his satisfaction and contentment.

Mere straitened circumstances should not be noted. Patience generally brings forth a better future for the servants. Moreover, we are not in a situation to ask Him to give our claims. Whatever He bestows upon us is from His Own bounteousness; and His graces come to us by the way of prophets and the saints.

The bitterness of worldly deprivations will become sweet by the help of Allah's promises to the believers, and the bounties of Heaven.

1. Surah At-Tawbah, No. 9, verse 92
2. Nahjul-Balāghah, saying No. 31, p. 550 (English version)
3. Surah 'Al-i-'Imrān, No. 3, verse 122

Section 8: The Hypocrites

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 60

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِنَ اللّهِ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

60. ***"Verily alms are for the poor and the needy, and the officials (appointed) over them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the captives, and the debtors, and for the cause of***

Allah, and (for) the wayfarer. (This is) a duty ordained by Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

The words /sadaqah/ (alms) and /sid□q/ (dowry) are derived from the words /sidq/ (truthfulness). Giving alms is a sign of truthfulness in the Faith to Allah, and dowry (or nuptial gift) is a sign of love to the wife.

The Arabic term /faqir/ is derived from /faqr/ (poverty). It is rendered to a person whose indigence is going to crash his bones. The Qur'□nic term /miskin/ (indigent) refers to a person who, because of indigency, sits at home, and is called 'a stay-at-home one'.

According to some Islamic narrations, /faqir/ (a poor person) is a needy person who usually does not ask people for help; but a /miskin/ (an indigent one) is a person who, because of intensity of indigency, in general, asks others to give him money.

Some Islamic traditions indicate that if the rich paid their alms tax to the deserving needy persons of the society, there would not exist any poor person.

A tradition cited in Was□'il-ush-Shi'ah says:

"Verily Allah has fixed, in the wealth of the rich, some amount for the poor to solve their difficulties. And if He knew it was not sufficient for them, He would increase it.... And if people paid the poor's rights to them, they could live very well."

The Purpose of 'Alms' Is 'Poor-rates'

Poor-tax is one of the certain necessary duties of the religion of Islam. That is why the Qur'□n in the above verse says that it is 'a duty ordained by Allah'. This phrase means that poor-tax is a certain obligatory commandment of Allah.

So, according to this holy verse, this poor-tax must be spent in the same eight positions which are said in the verse, and in other sites it is not permissible. Full majority of Islamic jurisprudents, of course, believe that poor-rates can be spent for all the eight mentioned instances, and it is not obligatory to divide it among them.

But, from one point of view, spending it in these eight instances depends on the social necessities, and from another point of view, it depends on the attitude of the Islamic government. These eight sites are as follows:

1. The poor;
2. The indigent (the needy);
3. The officials appointed over them;
4. Those whose hearts are to be reconciled;
5. To free the captives;

6. The debtors,
7. For the cause of Allah;
8. and the wayfarer.

The explanation of the first and the second group (the poor and the indigent) has been referred to before. The third group, the officials appointed over them, are all those persons who take trouble for: collecting alms, protecting them, distributing and accounting them. Therefore, their rage is paid from alms-tax itself.

The fourth group are those people who are not eager to embrace Islam. Then, by spending a portion of alm-tax, their hearts can be absorbed.

The payment of alms-tax for absorbing the hearts is not in the sense of their embracing Islam for money, but it is for creating a preparation in them that they obtain some understanding, and then they may have Faith.

The fifth aspect is to spend it in the way of freeing the captives and striving against the act of enslavement.

The sixth aspect of spending alms-tax is for the debtors. There are some debtors who have innocently contracted some debts, like those who have last all their properties in a fire accident, in a flood, and in other natural events. Such persons are counted in this item.

Imam Sādiq (as) said:

"Any believer or Muslim who dies and leaves a debt, which is not based on corruption and immoderation, it is upon Imam to pay that debt."

The seventh site is for the cause of Allah which encompasses any godly efforts of the faithful, such as: religious preachings, Holy Struggle, services of comfort of life, and solving the difficulties of the Muslims.

The eighth aspect is the wayfarer. A wayfarer is a person who is rich in his own town but, in the course of travel, accidentally, he has no money and is helpless.

The Effects of Poor-tax in the Society

1. Poor-tax is a factor of wealth adjustment.

2. Poor-tax is a practical thank for the things that Allah has given to that person.

3. Poor-tax decreases the class divisions of the society, and wipes out the rancour between the poor and the rich.

4. Poor-tax survives the spirit of generosity and grace in man, and decreases mammonism and material

dependence in him.

5. Poor-tax is a support for social securing of the deprive. It tells the poor not to be worried, and advises the bankrupt to try again. It says to the traveler not to be afraid of the lack of money in the way. It tells the employed that his share is preserved. It gives promise of freedom to the captives. It furnishes the field of godly services, and attracts the hearts of others to Islam.

6. But, multiplication of wealth causes some ungodly things, such as: negligence from the remembrance of Allah, exploitation from people, hard-heartedness, disobedience, and revelry, the remedy of which is poor-tax.

7. Besides wiping deprivation, poor-tax has some more merits. It increases attraction to Islam, or, at least, it causes persons not to cooperate with the enemies of Islam.

8. Some ordinary people believe that Islam has limited the increase of wealth and income for Muslims, while from the point of Islam’s view, human beings must be relatively free so that they enjoy the nature by effort and originative faculty and they develop. But paying tax is also necessary.

9. From the arrangement and order of the sites of spending alms tax, and that the poor and indigents are mentioned prior to other aspects; perhaps, it can be said that wiping poverty from the society is in precedence.

10. The existence of the law of alms tax in Islam does not mean that Islam wishes to have always some poor Muslims who take poor-tax and some rich ones to pay it; but it is a way by which an outward real problem of the society can be solved.

Sometimes, the rich also face with some afflicting events such as: theft of property, fire accident, traffic accident, war, and captivity. Therefore, in an Islamic system, there should exist a financial source for social security.

11. The ordinance of alms-tax was revealed in Mecca, but because of scarcity of the Muslims and the money of alms-tax, people paid it themselves.

But, later, after the formation of an Islamic government in Medina, the idea of taking alms-tax from people with the purpose of paying to the treasury of the Muslims, and its centrality by the Islamic ruler, came into being. One of its evidences in the Qur’ān is recited:

“Take alms out of their property…” (***Surah At-Tawbah, No. 9, verse 103***)

12. It is not necessary that the alms-tax be divided equally among all the eight aspects, but it can be divided under the control of the Islamic judge and as much as it is needed and according to the necessity of the circumstances.

13. The person who does not pay alms-tax and is in the opposition of the Islamic government thereby, can be fought against.

14. It is unlawful (harām) for a sayyid (a descendant of the Prophet) to take alms-tax, save that the giver and the taker of it are both sayyed.

15. The condition of consuming alms-tax in the way of Allah is not only being in the state of poverty, but wherever it helps the sovereignty of Islam it can be spent.

16. Alms-tax can be spent for the rescue of the society from the vice of the vicious persons. This meaning concerns to the phrase: ***"...and those whose hearts are to be reconciled..."*** mentioned in the verse.

17. If a blood-money is proved upon a person and he is not able to pay it, the case is included in the phrase:

"and the debtors..."

18. Maybe, the phrase: ***"...and to free the captives..."*** encompasses the usage of alms-tax for emancipation of prisoners or supplying their expenses.

19. In the Qur'ān, the concept of 'alms-tax' has often accompanied with 'prayer'; and according to the Islamic literature, the condition of prayer to be accepted is the payment of alms-tax. This status denotes to the relation of the connection with Allah and the connection with people.

However, none of the obligations of the religion has occurred in the Qur'ān so close to 'prayer' that alms-tax has. As for the evidence, some verses are mentioned in the following:

A) ***"And keep up the prayer, and pay the poor-rates (zakāt), and bow down in prayer with those who bow down (in congragation)," (Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 43).***

B) ***"And keep up the prayer, and pay the poor-rates..."(Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 110).***

C) ***"Verily, verily your guardian (waliyy) is only Allah and His Messenger and those who believe, those who establish the prayer and pay the poor-rate while bowing down (in prayer)." (Surah Al-Mā'idah, No. 5, verse 55).***

The consensus of the commentators of both great sects of Islam have cited that the objective meaning of this verse is Ali-ibn-Abitālib, Ali (as) as its occasion of revelation denotes, too. [1]

D) ***"...and Allah said: 'Verily I am with you, if you keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and believe in My messengers and assist them..." (Surah Al-Mā'idah, No. 5, verse 12).***

E) ***"...But if they repent and perform the prayer and pay the poor-rate, then leave their way free to***

***them…"*(*Surah At-Tawbah, No. 9, verse 5*).

F) ***"…Therefore, keep up the prayer and pay the poor-rate and hold fast by Allah…"*** (***Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22, verse 78***).

G) ***"…and We revealed to them the doing of good and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of the alms, and Us*** (***alone***) ***did they serve."*** (***Surah Al-'Anbiy, No. 21, verse 73***)

H) ***"…and the keeping up of the prayer and the giving of the poor-rate…"*** (***Surah An-Nr, No. 24, verse 37.***

I) ***"…and He has enjoined on me the prayer and the poor-rate so long as I live."*** (***Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 32***)

J) ***"And he enjoined on his family the prayer and the alms giving…"*** (***Surah Maryam, No. 9,verse 55***).

In addition to the above evidences, there are some more verses in this regard recited in the Qur'n.

It should also be noted that alms giving has not been enjoined only in Islam, but as it was pointed out in the explanations of the previous verses, it has been ordained in the former religions, too.

The law of poor-rate, which illustrates an outline from the Islamic system, provides the following traces:

Social justice, effacing poverty, providing personels and employees, international popularity, the emancipation of slaves and prisoners, string the powers and faculties, preserving the creed and honour of the Muslims, expansion of social services.

Poor-rate and Traditions

1. The Prophet (S) said:

"No group of people restrain(ed) the poor-rate but Allah restrains the rain from them."[2]

2. The Prophet (S) said:

"Whoever spends in charity (the poor-rate), there will be (appointed) for him from the bliss of the Heaven as much as the Mount of'Uhud for every coin (he has given)."[3]

3. Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

"Protect your properties by almsgiving."[4]

4. Imam Sdiq (as) narrating from his ancestors, said that the Holy Prophet (S) had said:

“The most generous (person among people) is the one who pays the poor-rate of his wealth; and the most niggardly (person among people) is the one who is stingy to what Allah has enjoyed on him.”[5]

5. Imam Sādiq (as) said:

“If people pay the poor-rate of their properties, there will remain no poor, needy Muslim.”[6]

6. The Holy Prophet (S) said:

“If you desire that Allah increases your wealth, then do pay its poor-rate.”[7]

7. Imam Bāqir (as) said:

“The poor-rate increases in the sustenance.”[8]

8. Imam Sādiq (as) said:

“When the poor-rate is restrained, the earth withholds its bounties.”[9]

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 61

وَمِنْهُمُ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ النَّبِيَّ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ أُذُنٌ قُلْ أُذُنُ خَيْرٍ لَكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللّهِ وَيُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ رَسُولَ اللّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

61*. “And there are among them those who hurt the Prophet and say: ‘He is an ear!’ Say: ‘An ear that is good for you; he believes in Allah, and believes the believers, and he is a mercy to those of you who believe. And those who hurt the messenger of Allah, there is a painful punishment for them’.”*

Some of the hypocrites said that the Prophet (S) was a simple and whimsical person, and he accepts whatever everybody says. Then, the Messenger of Allah (S) became inconvenient of them. At that time this verse was revealed and answered them. It says:

“And there are among them those who hurt the Prophet and say: ‘He is an ear!’…”

In fact, they demonstrated one of the advantages of the Prophet (S) in the form of his disadvantage, the existence of which is necessary in a leader.

That is why the Qur’ān, immediately after that, adds this idea in the verse implying that if the Prophet, as you imagine, is an ear and listens to your statements and accepts your excuse; it is useful for you. It says:

“…say: ‘An ear that is good for you…”

It is benefitable for you because, in this way, he protects your credit, and he does not waste your personality, and he does not hurt your feelings. Through this way, he employs his effort so that he preserves your affection, concord, and unity. But, if he uncovered the curtains and publicly disgraced the liars, there would arise a lot of troubles for you.

Then, in order that the criticizers do not misuse this statement and do not take it as a document, the verse continues implying that the Prophet (S) believes in Allah and his commandments, hearkens to the words of the true believers, and accepts them, and observes them. The verse adds:

"...he believes in Allah and believes the believers..."

That is, the Prophet (S), in fact, has two stages of treatment. One stage is conservation of the outward and hindering from betraying secrets, and the other is the stage of action. In the first stage, he listens to the statements of people, and, apparently, he does not reject them.

But, when the time of action comes forth, his attention is only to the commandments of Allah and to the suggestions which are uttered by the true believers. Thus, a leader, who tries to find the truth, should treat like that; and supplying the interests of a society is not possible save through this way. Hence, the Qur'ān, immediately after that, states:

"...and he is a mercy to those of you who believe..."

The only thing that should be added here is that those who hurt the Prophet (S) with such words, and find faults from him, should not think that they will be left without punishment. So, at the end of the verse, it says:

"...And those who hurt the messenger of Allah, there is a painful punishment for them'."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 62

يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللّهِ لَكُمْ لِيُرْضُوكُمْ وَاللّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَقُّ أَن يُرْضُوهُ إِن كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ

62. "They swear to you by Allah, to please you; but Allah and His Messenger have a greater right that they should please Him if they are believers."

A hypocrite always lives in fear and terror. He tries to attract the attention of others by oaths and affectation. For this reason, not every oath should be accepted, since sometimes the holy things are misused by some impious persons. The verse says:

"They swear to you by Allah, to please you..."

Allah's pleasure is the main principal for a believer, not the consent of common people. The pleasure of

the Messenger (S) is the same as the pleasure of Allah. The verse continues saying:

"...but Allah and His Messenger have a greater right that they should please Him if they are believers."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 63

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا اَنَّهُ مَن يُحَادِدِ اللّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَاَنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِداً فِيهَا ذَلِكَ الْخِزْيُ الْعَظِيمُ

63. ***"Do they not know that whoever opposes Allah and His Messenger verily for him is the fire of Hell to abide therein? That is the great abasement."***

The Qur'ānic phrase /yuhādidillāh/ (whoever opposes Allah) / means the limitation of the Power of Allah, as if Allah is limited in His deed of wrath unto them, though they considered that Allah's hands are closed. The verse says:

"Do they not know that whoever opposes Allah..."

Fakhr-i-Rāzi believes that this word is derived from the Arabic term /hadid/ with the sense of 'obstinacy'. He has cited that the Arabic term /muhaddah/ means either 'to violate the law of Allah', or 'to think oneself on one side and Allah on another side'.

Therefore, opposing the Islamic leader is an opposition against Allah; and the fruit of obstinacy before Allah is the eternal Hell. The verse says:

"...whoever opposes Allah and His Messenger verily for him is the fire of Hell to abide therein? That is the great abasement."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 64

يَحْذَرُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ اَن تُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُورَةٌ تُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ قُلِ اسْتَهْزِءُوا إِنَّ اللّهَ مُخْرِجٌ مَاتَحْذَرُونَ

64. ***"The hypocrites fear lest a 'Surah' should be sent down against them apprising them of what is in their hearts. Say: 'Mock on! Verily Allah will expose what you fear of "***

It has been said in the occasion of the revelation of this verse that a group of hypocrites made decision to startle the Prophet's camel in a neck of land when he was returning from the Battle of Tabūk, in a way that the Prophet (S) would be killed.

The Messenger of Allah was informed of their evil decision by means of revelation. 'Ammār and

Khuthayfah were guarding from forward and backward. When they (the Prophet (S) and the strivers) reached the neck of land, the hypocrites attacked them.

The Prophet (S) recognized them and told their names to Khuthayfah. He asked the Prophet (S) why he did not order that they should be killed, and the Messenger of Allah answered:

“I do not want that others say when Muhammad became powerful he killed the Muslims.”

At the absence of the Prophet (S), the hypocrite mockingly said that he wanted to occupy the castles of Syria. The revelation was sent down denoting that they might mock whatever much they desired, and Allah would make manifest their plans. The verse says:

“The hypocrites fear lest a ‘Surah’ should be sent down against them apprising them of what is in their hearts…”

The Qur’ānic term /sūrah/ means the totality of the Divine verses. In technical terminology, this term has been applied for the whole 114 Suras of the Qur’ān.

The hypocrites were constantly in scare because of manifestation of their own real feature and their deviations. They had understood that the Messenger of Allah (S) was aware of their affairs by means of revelation, yet they mocked him.

But the way of treatment of Allah, and His promise upon the hypocrites, is that He divulges their secrets. So, you should not be worried of their stings. The help of Allah is always with you. The verse continues saying:

“…Say: ‘Mock on! Verily Allah will expose what you fear of ”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 65

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ قُلْ أَبِاللّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ كُنتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ

65. *“And if you question them (regarding their mockery), they will certainly say: ‘We were only discoursing and sporting.’ Say: “Were you mocking Allah, His signs, and His Messenger?”*

The Arabic term /xaud/ means ‘to step in mud’, but it is used in the Qur’ān with the meaning of ‘starting some indecent actions.’

This verse, again, concerns the Battle of Tabūk when the hypocrites intended to kill the Prophet (S) in his return from that battle. One of those hypocrites had said what they would do if their plot was divulged. Another of them said that they could pretend it was a jesting. Their statement was a clamsy excuse.[10]

Now, the question is whether it is possible to joke anything, even Allah, the Prophet, and the verses of the Qur’ān.

Was the subject of startling the Prophet’s camel and his fall from that dangerous neck of land something that could be covered under the mask of jesting?

The verse says:

“And if you question them** (**regarding their mockery**), **they will certainly say: ‘We were only discoursing and sporting.’ Say: ‘Were you mocking Allah, His signs, and His Messenger?’

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 66

لاتَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ إِن نَعْفُ عَن طَآئِفَةٍ مِنكُمْ نُعَذِّبْ طَآئِفَةً بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ

66*. “Do not make excuses. You have disbelieved after your believing. If We forgive a party of you* (***because of repentance***)***, We will chastise*** (***another***) ***party for that they have been sinners.”***

Every time that the plot of the hypocrites was divulged and their secrets were manifested for the Muslims, they offered some excuses, including the very excuse mentioned in this verse. They said they did not intend seriously, but it was only an amusement and a play. The Qur’ān does not accept their excuse, and says:

“Do not make excuses. You have disbelieved after your believing…”

That is, after the expression of Faith, which was not true of course, they did some actions by which their apparent belief became invalid and their infidelity was made manifest to the Muslims.

In the continuation of the verse, the Qur’ān says:

“…If We forgive a party of you (***because of repentance***)***, We will chastise*** (***another***) ***party for that they have been sinners.”***

The purpose of the verse is that those members of the hypocrites who repent and really return toward Islam, will be forgiven; but those hypocrites who remain in their own disbelief and hypocrisy will be punished.

Besides the chastisement of the Hereafter, this punishment occurred in this very life upon them. The Prophet (S) disgraced that party of the hypocrites who resisted on their hypocrisy. The example of it was the Mosque of Dirār, the chargers of which were openly criticized.

1. Tafsir-ul-Bahr-ul-Muhit, vol. 3, p. 513; Tafsir-i-Fath-ul-Qadir, vol. 2, p. 53; Ehqāq-ul-Haqq, vol. 2, p. 400; and Kanz-ul-‘Ummāl, vol. 6, p. 391.

2. Al-Mustatraf, vol. 1, p.9
3. Roudat-ul-Wā‘izin, p.418
4. Tuhaf-ul-‘Uqūl, p.113; and Bihār-ul-Anwār, vol.93, p. 13
5. Bihār-ul-’Anwār, vol.93, p.11
6. Al-Imam-as-Sādiq (as), Asad Heydar, vol.4, p.360
7. Bihār-ul-’Anwār, vol.93, p.23
8. Bihār-ul-Anwār, vol.75, p.83
9. Al-Muhajjat-ul-Baydā’, vol.2, p.66
10. Majma‘-ul-Bayān, the commentary.

Section 9: Allah’s Curse for the Hypocrites

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 67

الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُم مِن بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ
إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

67*. “The hypocrite men and the hypocrite women are as one another; they enjoin evil and forbid good, and they keep their hands shut. They have forsaken Allah, so He has forsaken them,* (*too*)*. The hypocrites are indeed the transgressors.”*

The Signs of the Hypocrites

In this verse, the Qur’ān points to a general matter. It implies that the spirit of hypocrisy may appear in different shapes, and the form of ostentation in particular. The spirit of hypocrisy may be different in a man and in a woman, but the variety of the features of hypocrisy among hypocrites should not deceive us.

Therefore, the verse says:

“The hypocrite men and the hypocrite women are as one another...”

After mentioning that meaning, the verse refers to five epithets out of the hypocrite’s qualities as follows:

The first and the second epithets of the hypocrites are that they usually encourage people to evil and restrain them from good.

That is, contrast to the program of the true believers who ceaselessly, through enjoining good and forbidding evil, try to improve the society and to purify it from pollution and corruption, the hypocrites

always try to expand corruption everywhere and to dismiss goodness from the society. The verse says:

"...they enjoin evil and forbid good..."

Their third epithet is that they neither spend in the way of Allah, nor do they help the deprive, nor do they financially assist their relatives and those who are familiar with them. The verse says:

"...and they keep their hands shut..."

The fourth quality of the hypocrites is that all their deeds, statements, and behaviours denote that they have forgotten the Lord, and also the situation of their lives indicates that the Lord has deprived them from some of His bounties, successes, and merits, too. The signs of these two abandonments are vividly reflected in their lives. The verse continues saying:

"...They have forsaken Allah, so He has forsaken them, (too)..."

The fifth quality of theirs is that they are impious and they live outside the circle of the obedience of Allah, i.e. not only they are mischievous, but also they are disobedient. The verse concludes as follows:

"...The hypocrites are indeed the transgressors."

Whatever was said in this verse about the qualifications of the hypocrites is seen in such people in any age.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 68

وَعَدَ اللّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا هِيَ حَسْبُهُمْ وَلَعَنَهُمُ اللّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ

68. ***"Allah has promised the hypocrite men and the hypocrite women and the infidels, the Fire of Hell, to abide in it forever. That is enough for them, Allah has cursed them, and for them is a lasting chastisement."***

The promise of Hell, stated in the abovementioned holy verse, is decreed at first for the hypocrites and secondly for the disbelievers.

Whatever more apparently fitting the hypocrites settle themselves in the row of the believers in this world, it is of no vail and they will be in the row of disbelievers in Hereafter.

The verse says:

"Allah has promised the hypocrite men and the hypocrite women and the infidels, the Fire of Hell, to abide in it forever..."

And since Hell is the collection of any pain, affliction and tribution, then it is enough for the hypocrites and infidels both. The verse continues saying:

"...That is enough for them, Allah has cursed them, and for them is a lasting chastisement."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 69

كَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنكُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرَ أَمْوَالاً وَأَوْلاَداً فَاسْتَمْتَعُوا بِخَلاقِهِمْ فَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِخَلاَقِكُمْ كَمَا اسْتَمْتَعَ
الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُم بِخَلاَقِهِمْ وَخُضْتُمْ كَالَّذِي خَاضُوا أُوْلَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالاَخِرَةِ وَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

69*. "(****O' hypocrites! You are***) ***like those who were before you, they were stronger than you I power and more abundant in wealth and children; so they enjoyed their portion; thus do you enjoy your portion as those before you did enjoy their portion; and you indulge in vain discourses as they indulged. These are those whose works are null in this world and the Hereafter, and those are the losers."***

An Admonition and a Warning

In order to awaken this group of the hypocrites, the abovementioned holy verse puts the mirror of the history before them and, comparing them with the former stubborn hypocrites, it teaches them the most instructive lessons.

It implies that they are like the former hypocrites and they follow the same path, the same program, and the same evil fate of theirs. The verse says:

*"(****O' hypocrites! You are***) ***like those who were before you..."***

Those very hypocrites of old were stronger and more abundant both from the point of strength and from the point of properties and children than these ones. The verse says:

"...they were stronger than you in power and more abundant in wealth and children..."

They enjoyed their share of the bounties of this world in the way of lusts, pollutions, sins, mischief, and corruption. These hypocrites of this community also enjoyed their own share in the same way that the former hypocrites had enjoyed.

"...so they enjoyed their portion..."

Then, the Qur'ān adds in the verse:

"...thus do you enjoy your portion as those before you did enjoy their portion; and you indulge in vain discourses as they indulged..."

For an admonition and a warning to the group of hypocrites contemporary with the Prophet (S) and all the hypocrites of the world, the Qur'ān, through two phrases, remarks the end of the former hypocrites.

The first phrase is recited:

"...These are those whose works are null in this world and the Hereafter..."

And the second phrase says:

"...and those are the losers."

Such hypocrites may enjoy some temporary and limited benefits from their hypocritical deeds in this life, but if the circumstance be observed carefully, it can be made manifest that, they enjoy of real benefits neither in this world nor in the next world.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 70

أَلَمْ يَأْتِهِمْ نَبَأُ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَقَوْمِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَأَصْحَابِ مَدْيَنَ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَاتِ أَتَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
فَمَا كَانَ اللّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِن كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

70. ***"Has not the news of those before them came to them, of the people of Noah and 'Ād and Thamūd, and the people of Abraham and the dwellers of Madyan and the subverted cities? Their Messengers came to them with clear arguments, so it was not Allah to do injustice unto them, but they unto themselves used to be unjust."***

In this holy verse, the Qur'ān addresses the Prophet (S) and, as a positive interrogation with a negative sense, says:

"Has not the news of those before them came to them, of the people of Noah and 'Ād and Thamūd, and the people of Abraham and the dwellers of Madyan and the subverted cities?..."

These are some shaking events the study and searching of which moves any person with the least feeling in his heart.

Yet, Allah did not deprive them from His grace, which was His guidance and, as the verse says:

"...Their Messengers came to them with clear arguments..."

But they did hearken to none of those godly prophets and did not consider worthy their laborious troubles in the way of guiding the servants of Allah. Thus, never did Allah injustice unto them, but they unto themselves did injustice. The verse says:

"...so it was not Allah to do injustice unto them, but they unto themselves used to be unjust."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 71

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَولِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلاَةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُوْلَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمْ اللّهُ إِنَّ اللّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

71*. “And the believer men and the believer women, they are guardians to one another; they enjoin good and forbid evil and they perform the prayer and they pay the alms* (*zak�t*), *and they obey Allah and His Messenger. It is they on whom Allah will bestow His Mercy. Verily Allah is the Mighty, the Wise.”*

The Signs of the True Believers

The signs of true believers, men and women, have been mentioned in the verse under discussion. These signs are also figured five here:

The verse beings as follows:

“And the believer men and the believer women, they are guardians to one another;

After referring to this general principle, the revelation pays to the explanation of the details of the epithets of the believers.

1- At first, it implies that they invite people to good. The verse continues saying:

“...they enjoin good...”

2- They also restrain people from vices, wickednesses, and unlawful things:

“...and forbid evil...”

3- Contrast to the hypocrites, who usually forget Allah, the believers always establish prayer; keep the remembrance of Allah, and, consequently, by this remembrance and the Name of Allah, they cause their hearts to be light and their minds to be aware. The holy verse says:

“...and they perform the prayer...”

4- Again, contrast to the hypocrites who are some niggardly persons, the believers pay a part of their wealth as the alms (zak�t) in the way of Allah and for Allah and for supporting the servants of Allah (s.w.t.), in order to improve their society. The verse says:

“...and they pay the alms (***zak�t***)***...”***

5- The hypocrites are mischievous, and disobedient, and they behave outside of the circle of the

commandment of Allah; but believers obey the command of Allah and His Messenger. The verse says:

“…and they obey Allah and His Messenger…”

At the end of this verse, the Qur’ān points to the first privilege of the believers from the point of their fate and their reward. It says:

“…It is they on whom Allah will bestow His Mercy…”

No doubt the promise of mercy to the believers is from the side of Allah. This promise is conclusive and assured from any point of view, because:

“…Verily Allah is the Mighty, the Wise.”

Neither does He promise without any cause, nor does He fail its fulfilment when He promises.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 42

وَعَدَ اللّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ وَرِضْوَانٌ
مِنَ اللّهِ أَكْبَرُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

72. ***“Allah has promised the believer men and the believer women gardens beneath which rivers flow wherein shall they abide forever, and goodly dwellings in garden of perpetual abode, yet Allah’s good pleasure is greater (than all these); that is the great success.”***

In this holy verse, the very believers whose epithets were pointed out before, are promised some excellent things, the most important of which is the bounty of His good pleasure. What state can be greater than the good pleasure of Allah for a believer? The verse says:

“Allah has promised the believer men and the believer women gardens beneath which rivers flow wherein shall they abide forever, and goodly dwellings in garden of perpetual abode, yet Allah’s good pleasure is greater (than all these); that is the great success.”

The garden which Allah will bestow on the believers has been qualified differently in the Qur’ān. They are such as: /jannāt-i-‘adnin/ (gardens of perpetual abode), /jannat-ul-ma’wā/ (the garden, the abode), and /jannat-ul-xuld/ (garden of eternity).

The purpose of the first qualification, mentioned here, is the statement of eternity of Paradise. It has been said that this garden is located in the middle of Paradise, or it is the best place of Paradise. A tradition narrated from the Prophet (S) denotes that, it is the situation of the place of prophets, veracious believers, and martyrs.

Of course, entering into Paradise and enjoying its bounties can be a good goal for the believers, but greater than that is gaining the good pleasure of Allah. This is the main goal of any believer who has settled the love of Allah in his heart, and has considerably climbed towards the climax of the cognition of Allah (s.w.t.).

Section 10: The Hypocrites Shall Not Attain Their Object

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 73

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ

73. ***"O' Prophet! strive hard against the infidels and the hypocrites, and be harsh with them, and their abode shall be Hell, and an evil destination it is."***

As long as the hypocrites have not initiated war and have not plotted against Islam, similar to the enemy alien nonbelievers, holy struggle upon them should be done only by tongue. [1]

Before the revelation of the abovementioned verse, the Prophet (S) treated the hypocrites gently and nobly, but after the revelation of this verse his treatment became severe toward them.[2]

Thus, the Prophet (S), who is the source of mercy, is commissioned to severity because of infidelity and hypocrisy of the enemies of Islam. The verse says:

"…And be harsh with them…"

Therefore, an Islamic leader must be decisive and sharp before the arrogance. He must strive against both the manifest foreign enemies and the interior hidden enemies. However, the Holy Struggle should be led under the command and attitude of the leader of the Muslims, who is, indeed, the commander-in-chief of the army in the Islamic system of government. The verse says:

"O' Prophet! strive hard against the infidels and the hypocrites, and be harsh with them, and their abode shall be Hell, and an evil destination it is."

This fact should also be noted that Holy Struggle against infidels and hypocrites is the recompense of these unbelieving people in this world, and their retribution in the coming world will be Hell.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 74

يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللّهِ مَاقَالُوا وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلاَمِهِمْ وَهَمُّوا بِمَا لَمْ يَنَالُوا وَمَا نَقَمُوا إِلاَّ أَنْ أَغْنَاهُمُ اللّهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ فَإِن يَتُوبُوا يَكُ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَإِن يَتَوَلَّوْا يُعَذِّبْهُمُ اللّهُ عَذَاباً أَلِيماً فِي الْدُّنْيَا وَالاَخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِي الاَرْضِ
مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلانَصِيرٍ

74. ***"They swear by Allah that they have said nothing, but they certainly have said the word of infidelity and disbelieved after their Islam, and they determined upon what they never attained to, and they did not find fault except because Allah and His Messenger enriched them out of His grace. Therefore if they repent, it will be better for them; and if they turn away, Allah will chastise them with a painful chastisement in this world and the Hereafter, and they shall not have on the earth any guardian or any helper."***

This holy verse includes all the plots that the hypocrites designed and acted against the Holy Prophet (S) and Islam, but most of the commentary books compiled by the Shi'ite and the Sunnite commentators have concerned it to the

plot which is known as the 'Laylatul-'Aqabah' (the Night of 'Aqabah) where the hypocrites waited in ambush in a neck of land in order to cause the murder of the Prophet (S) by startling his camel. But their plot was found out and they failed. The verse says:

"They swear by Allah that they have said nothing, but they certainly have said the word of infidelity and disbelieved after their Islam, and they determined upon what they never attained to..."

It has been cited that when the Prophet (S) was speaking for the audience in Tabūk, a hypocrite, by the name of Hallās, uttered a blasphemous ugly word. One of the Prophet's companions ('Āmir-ibn-Qays) informed that insolence to the Prophet (S).

He summoned Hallās, but he denied the matter. 'Āmir said that he told a lie and repeated that word. Then, by the command of the Prophet (S) both of them went near the pulpit of the mosque and swore. 'Āmir asked Allah to send down a verse and to disgrace the hypocrite publicly. This holy verse was revealed containing the phrase saying:

"They swear by Allah that they have said nothing, but they certainly have said the word of infidelity and disbelieved after their Islam, and they determined upon what they never attained to..."

Then, at the end of the verse, the Qur'ān denotes that if the hypocrites repent and really embrace Islam it is better for them, viz, Allah will forgive them. But if they turn away and remain in their hypocrisy, they

must know that Allah will punish them severely both in this world and the coming world, and they will not have any friend or helper on the earth. The verse continues saying:

"...and they did not find fault except because Allah and His Messenger enriched them out of His grace. Therefore if they repent, it will be better for them; and if they turn away, Allah will chastise them with a painful chastisement in this world and the Hereafter, and they shall not have on the earth any guardian or any helper."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verses 75-78

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ عَاهَدَ اللّهَ لَئِنْ ءَاتَانَا مِن فَضْلِهِ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْصَّالِحِينَ

فَلَمَّآ ءَاتَاهُم مِن فَضْلِهِ بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَتَوَلَّوا وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ

فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقاً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهُ بِمَآ أَخْلَفُوا اللّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ وَأَنَّ اللّهَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ

75. *"And of them are those who have made a covenant with Allah: 'If He gives us out of His grace, we will certainly give alms (zakāt) and we will certainly be of the righteous'."*

76. *"But when He gave them out of His Grace, they were niggardly of it and they turned away, swerving aside."*

77. *"So as a consequence He put hypocrisy into their hearts until the day they will meet Him, because they failed to fulfil unto Allah what they had promised Him and because of what they used to lie."*

78. *"Do they not know that Allah knows their hidden (thought) and their secret whisperings, and that Allah is the knower of all unseen (things).*

The first verse of the abovementioned group of verses is about some of the hypocrites who made a covenant with Allah and then they broke it. It has also been said that the verse has been revealed concerning 'Tha'labat-ibn Hātab' who was a poor man.

He asked the Prophet (S) that he would pray for him in this regard. He said if the Prophet (S) prayed and he became rich, he would remit considerably in the way of Allah, and he would become one of the benevolent persons.

The Prophet (S) prayed for him and he became rich enough, but he stinted. He also did not participated in 'Friday Prayer', and thereupon he made his hypocrisy manifest.

Whatever the sign of the revelation of the verse might be, however, it is about some persons who have always existed and are existed in the societies.

When such people have not wealth and facilities, they may make covenant with Allah that if Allah bestowed upon them properties and they became rich they would pay in charity in His way and would become righteous and of the good servants of Allah.

But they often do not do like that when He causes them to be wealthy. They scant and usually avoid doing good things. The verse says:

"And of them are those who have made a covenant with Allah: 'If He gives us out of His grace, we will certainly give alms (zakāt) and we will certainly be of the righteous'."

An important matter, regarding this subject mentioned in the second verse, is that this breach of covenant and becoming stingy causes hypocrisy to come into existence in their hearts.

When a person behaves like that, he has to clasp to justification of himself and has to say something through his tongue which he does not believe in his inward. It is similar to the manner of the hypocrites who, in order to protect themselves, expressed Islam falsely and said something that they did not believe. The verse says:

"But when He gave them out of His Grace, they were niggardly of it and they turned away, swerving aside."

The one who makes covenant, but he breaches it, or promises something but he fails, he has somehow the same status of hypocrisy and duplicity. Therefore, in this verse, the Qur'ān remarks that the appearance of the state of hypocrisy in such persons originates from where they have breached their promise and have told a lie. The verse says:

"So as a consequence He put hypocrisy into their hearts until the day they will meet Him, because they failed to fulfil unto Allah what they had promised Him and because of what they used to lie."

Thus, according to this verse, breach of promise and falsehood are two signs for hypocrisy. This meaning is also referred to in a tradition narrated from the Holy Prophet (S) who said:

"There are three signs for a hypocrite: when he speaks he tells a lie; when he promises he fails; and when he is trusted he proves treacherous."

In the next verse, the Qur'ān states about these hypocrites as follows:

“Do they not know that Allah knows their hidden (thought) and their secret whisperings, and that Allah is the knower of all unseen (things).

That is, Allah is aware of all their secrets whether those ones that they tell each other as mysteries, and those secrets which they whisper.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verses 79-80

الَّذِينَ يَلْمِزُونَ الْمُطَّوِّعِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الْصَّدَقَاتِ وَالَّذِينَ لايَجِدُونَ إِلاَّ جُهْدَهُمْ فَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنْهُمْ سَخِرَ اللّهُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

اسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ أَوْ لاتَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ إِن تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَن يَغْفِرَ اللّهُ لَهُمْ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَاللّهُ لايَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

79. ***“Those who find fault with the voluntary givers of alms from among the believers, and those who find nothing (to give) but (to the extent of) their endeavour, and they scoff at them, Allah will scoff at them, and for them shall be a painful chastisement.”***

80. ***“Whether you ask forgiveness for them or do not ask forgiveness for them; if you ask forgiveness for them seventy times, Allah will not forgive them; this is because they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger; and Allah does not guide the ungodly people.”***

In view of the fact that the foundation of the behaviour of the hypocrites was opposing the Muslims and finding fault with them, they often cavilled at the Muslims’ affairs and mocked them. Among them was that some of the rich

Muslims remitted their wealth in the way of Allah more than the amount which they were enjoined upon. Those rich believers did it eagerly and at pleasure in order that Islam could glitter more and more. Their main aim was that they might obtain some divine spiritual rewards.

There were also some Muslims who did not possess plenty of properties, but with difficultly they provided some money and spent it. These two parties of the Muslims were mocked and were found fault by the hypocrites.

The hypocrites smiled scornly at them meaning why those Muslims lost their own wealth. The hypocrites did not believe in the Divine rewards of Hereafter. They imagined that remitting wealth to others was as squandering it, and it was a kind of folly.

The Qur’ān refers to this ignorantly manner of the hypocrites and says:

“Those who find fault with the voluntary givers of alms from among the believers, and those who find nothing (to give) but (to the extent of) their endeavour, and they scoff at them, Allah will scoff at them, and for them shall be a painful chastisement.”

The Qur’ānic phrase which says: ***“Allah will scoff at them ”*** means that Allah will give them the retribution of their scoffing, and, in the Hereafter, He will arrange a situation wherein these hypocrites will be mocked by the Muslims. At that circumstance, the believers will scoff at them and laugh at them.

The number ‘seventy’ here is a code for multiplication and it is not the statement of a definite calculation. In other words, it indicates whatever more you seek forgiveness for them, it will be uneffective. So, it does not mean that if you seek forgiveness seventy one times, for example, they will be forgiven.

Some Islamic literature indicates that the Holy Prophet (S) in this regard has said:

“If I knew seeking forgiveness more than seventy times could save them, I would seek forgiveness.” 3

Man may reach a point in aberration where nothing can save him; like a patient whom no physician is able to help when the soul separates from him. The verse says:

“Whether you ask forgiveness for them or do not ask forgiveness for them; if you ask forgiveness for them seventy times, Allah will not forgive them; this is because they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger; and Allah does not guide the ungodly people.”

1. The of Al-Minār
2. Tafsir-i-Fi-Zilāl-il-Qur’ān
3. Majma‘-ul-Bayān, the commentary

Section 11: Connections Severed With the Hypocrites

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 81

فَرِحَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ بِمَقْعَدِهِمْ خِلاَفَ رَسُولِ اللّهِ وَكَرِهُوا أَن يُجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ وَقَالُوا لاَتَنْفِرُوا فِي الْحَرِّ قُلْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ أَشَدُّ حَرّاً لَوْ كَانُوا يَفْقَهُونَ

81. ***“Those who were left behind were glad on account of their sitting behind against (the command of) the Messenger of Allah, and were averse from striving with their possessions and their selves in the way of Allah, and said: ‘Do not go forth in the heat’. Say: ‘The Fire of Hell is***

much severe in heat, if only they could understand'."

The hypocrites were happy that they had not participated in the Holy Struggle, because they did not like to strive in the way of Allah by their properties and their lives. They not only did not participate themselves in the Holy Struggle but also prevented some others to take part in it. The verse in this regard says:

"Those who were left behind were glad on account of their sitting behind against (the command of) the Messenger of Allah, and were averse from striving with their possessions and their selves in the way of Allah..."

The Battle of Tab�k happened in a season when the weather was very hot and blazing then the hypocrites prohibited people not to go forth in that hot weather. Therefore, Allah answers them that the Fire of Hell is more blazing if they understand. The verse continues saying:

"...and said: 'Do not go forth in the heat'. Say: 'The Fire of Hell is much severe in heat, if only they could understand."

That is, they were afraid of the heat of the weather while the blazing Fire of Hell is waiting for them.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 82

فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلاً وَلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيراً جَزَآءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

82. ***"Therefore they shall laugh a little and weep much (as) a recompense for what they used to earn."***

If the hypocrites knew what kind of rewards they have lost and how great opportunities and bounties they have rejected because of abandonment of the participation in the Holy Struggle, they should make merry little and weep very much. Yet, comparing the long time weepings in the Hereafter, that they will have before them, the weeping during their life-time is naught.

The verse says:

"Therefore they shall laugh a little and weep much (as) a recompense for what they used to earn."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 83

فإن رَجَعَكَ اللّهُ إِلَى طَآئِفَةٍ مِنْهُمْ فَاسْتَأْذَنُوكَ لِلْخُرُوجِ فَقُل لَن تَخْرُجُوا مَعِيَ أَبَداً وَلَن تُقَاتِلُوا مَعِيَ عَدُوّاً إِنَّكُم رَضِيتُمْ
بِالْقُعُودِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ فَاقْعُدُوا مَعَ الْخَالِفِينَ

83. ***“So if Allah brings you back to a party of them and they ask your permission to go forth, say: ‘You shall never go forth with me and you shall never fight an enemy with me; surely you were pleased to sit (idle) the first time, then sit (now also idle) with those who stay behind’.”***

Whoever repents sincerely and truthfully, it will be accepted by Allah, but the hypocrites asked permission to go to fight hypocritically and affectedly.

The Qur’ānic term /xālif/ means both ‘the one who violates going fight’, and ‘an antagonist’.

Do not trust upon the hypocrites’ request for attending in the Holy Struggle. The verse says:

“So if Allah brings you back to a party of them and they ask your permission to go forth, say…”

And do fear from those who escaped from going to fight yesterday but they are candidates to attend in the battle-field today. The verse continues saying:

“…‘You shall never go forth with me and you shall never fight an enemy with me…”

Therefore, hypocrites must be despised and deserted. The holy verse concludes as follows:

“…surely you were pleased to sit (idle) the first time, then sit (now also idle) with those who stay behind.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 84

وَلا تُصَلِّ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْهُم مَاتَ أَبَداً وَلاتَقُمْ عَلَى قَبْرِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

84. ***“And never pray over any one of them who dies, nor stand by his grave. They indeed disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and died while they were ungodly.”***

The way of the Prophet’s life (S) was so that he used to attend in the funeral and burial ceremonies of Muslims’ deads. He prayed for them and established funeral prayer over their corpses. But Allah has prohibited His Messenger to attend in the ceremonies of the dead bodies of the hypocrites. The verse says:

“And never pray over any one of them who dies, nor stand by his grave. They indeed disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and died while they were ungodly.”

Thus, the dead body of a hypocrite is also despised when Muslims ought not to attend their funerals nor stand by their graves. Establishing funeral prayer and visitation of tombs is as a sign of a reverence and an esteem to the body of a Muslim believer; and since a hypocrite deserves no reverence, then the verse says:

“...never pray over any one of them who dies, nor stand by his grave...”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 85

وَلاَ تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَأَوْلاَدُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللّهُ أَن يُعَذِّبَهُم بِهَا فِي الْدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ

85. ***“And let not their possessions and their children astonish you; verily Allah only desires thereby to chastise them in this world, and that their souls depart while they are infidels.”***

A similar statement to this verse, with a little difference in recitation, was referred to in holy verse No. 55 of the current Surah.

However, sometimes it happens that, instead of welfare and happiness, wealth and children are the cause of affliction and chastisement for a group of people. That is why the verse says:

“And let not their possessions and their children astonish you; verily Allah only desires thereby to chastise them in this world, and that their souls depart while they are infidels.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 86

وإِذَآ أُنْزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا بِاللّهِ وَجَاهِدُوا مَعَ رَسُولِهِ اسْتَأْذَنَكَ أُولُوا الطَّوْلِ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالُوا ذَرْنَا نَكُن مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ

86. ***“And whenever a Surah is sent down, saying ‘Believe in Allah and strive hard along with His Messenger’, those with abundant means among them ask leave of you, and they say: ‘Let us be with those who sit back.”***

Sometimes it happened that a Surah or a verse of the Qur’ān concerning the believers was revealed and invited them to be firm in Faith and to strive in the way of Allah beside the Prophet (S).

Such revelations caused the believers to become spiritually encouraged, firm, and steadfast; but those Divine revelations caused the hypocrites to become inconvenient and despondent. So, they (the hypocrites) sometimes came to the Prophet (S) and uttered some materials which clearly indicated their hypocrisy.

This verse denotes that when a Surah was revealed wherein people were enjoined to belief in Allah and Holy Struggle beside the Prophet (S), some of the rich hypocrites came to the Messenger of Allah (S) and asked permission not to participate in the Holy Struggle.

They said that they might be allowed to stay at home with those who could stay at home, and not to take part in the Holy Struggle. The verse says:

“And whenever a Surah is sent down, saying ‘Believe in Allah and strive hard along with His Messenger’, those with abundant means among them ask leave of you, and they say: ‘Let us be with those who sit back.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 87

رَضُوا بِأَن يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ وَطُبِعَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لاَيَفْقَهُونَ

87*. “They were content that they should be with those who stay behind, and a seal has been set upon their hearts, so they do not understand.”*

The matter discussed in the previous verse is continued in this verse, saying that the hypocrites became happy to stay with those who stay behind and, like women, children, and patients, who do not take part in Holy Struggle, and to remain at home.

It is clear that he who has no Faith in Allah will certainly refuse to go to fight in His way, because he does not believe in the excellent rewards that Allah has promised for the godly strivers. Therefore, a hypocrite considers that participation in such a war is a fall into danger and it is a kind of self murder.

Then, at the end of the verse, the Qur’ān adds that the hearts of the hypocrites are sealed. Therefore, they do not conceive the Truth, for there have been drawn a curtain before their eyes and ears. It is their infidelity that has caused them to be incapable to understand the facts.

The verse says:

“They were content that they should be with those who stay behind, and a seal has been set upon their hearts, so they do not understand.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 88

لكِنِ الْرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ جَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَأُوْلَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْخَيْرَاتُ وَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

88*. “But the Messenger, and those who believe with him, strive hard with their possessions and their selves, and these it is who shall have good things and these it is who shall be successful.”*

In the verse before this verse, the Qur’ān denoted that the hypocrites usually refuse to participate in Holy Struggle in the way of Allah and they like to stay at home at the time of war like women, little children, and sick persons.

Now, in this verse, those persons are referred to whose manner is just opposite to that of the hypocrites.

They consist in the Prophet (S) and the believers who are ever ready to participate in Holy Struggle with all their possibilities.

The verse says:

“But the Messenger, and those who believe with him, strive hard with their possessions and their selves, and these it is who shall have good things and these it is who shall be successful.”

This ending part of the verse means that Allah will give them some good rewards, and they will reach to the happiness of both this world and the Hereafter.

In this world, they gain happiness by overcoming the enemies and strengthening the foundation of their own society toward ever-increasing progression. And in the Hereafter, they will be rewarded by being enjoyed of the Divine bounties.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 89

أَعَدَّ اللّهُ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

89. ***“Allah has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow wherein shall they abide forever. That is the great success.”***

In this verse, the statement is upon the great rewards that Allah will bestow on the believers. It remarks that, for such believers who strive in the way of Allah with their wealth and selves, Allah has prepared gardens that rivers flow under their trees and, more important than that is that, they will eternally abide therein.

Then the Qur’ān adds that this circumstance is that very great success. The verse says:

“Allah has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow wherein shall they abide forever. That is the great success.”

There are also some more rewards promised for the strivers which have been mentioned in some other verses of the Qur’ān. One of them is that Allah guides those who strive in His way unto His ways.

That is, He will bestow on them a sort of recognition that they can be informed of the facts of the world of existence and enjoy the special and particular guidance of Allah, so that they may not be involved with misunderstanding. Surah ‘Ankabūt, No. 29, verse 69 says:

“And (as for) those who strive hard for Us, We will most certainly guide them in Our ways...”

Section 12: The Deserters

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 90

وَجَآءَ الْمُعَذِّرُونَ مِنَ الاَعْرَابِ لِيُؤْذَنَ لَهُمْ وَقَعَدَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا اللّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

90*. “And the dwellers of the desert came with their excuses, that permission might be given to them* (*to stay back*)*, and those who lied to Allah and His Messenger sat* (*at home*)*. Soon a painful chastisement shall afflict those of them who disbelieved.”*

Some of those People who did not take part in the Holy Struggle had true excuses for which they obtained leave, while some others did not participated in the Holy Struggle without having any exemption, and the abovementioned chastisement is for the second group.

The term /’a‘r⃞b/, mentioned here, has been applied for some Bedouins who lived in deserts and were far from the city civilization.

However, Holy Struggle is something concerned to Islamic government and it is not a personal affair. That is why both attending in it and leaving it should be done with the permission of the leader of the Muslims. The verse says:

“And the dwellers of the desert came with their excuses, that permission might be given to them, (***to stay back***)***…”***

By the way, those who are heedless to the obligatory rule of Holy Struggle and try to escape from it, are liars in their belief. They must know that the seekers of exemption, who try to run away from performing their duty, will be punished and a painful chastisement is waiting for them. The verse continues saying:

“…and those who lied to Allah and His Messenger sat (***at home***)***. Soon a painful chastisement shall afflict those of them who disbelieved.”***

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 91

لَيْسَ عَلَى الضُّعَفَآءِ وَلا عَلَى الْمَرْضَى وَلا عَلَى الَّذِينَ لايَجِدُونَ مَايُنْفِقُونَ حَرَجٌ إِذَا نَصَحُوا لِلّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ مَا عَلَى
اَلْمُحْسِنِينَ مِن سَبِيلٍ وَاللّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

91. “There is no fault in the weak and the sick and those who find nothing to spend, so long as they are true to Allah and to His Messenger. There is no way (***to blame***) ***against the good-doers***

and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

A blind old man came to the Prophet (S) and said:

"I have nobody to take my hand and to lead me to the battle-field. I am old and feable. Is my excuse accepted?"

The Prophet (S) kept silence for a while until the abovementioned verse was revealed.

In these recent couple of verses, and the following one, in order to make clear the situation of all groups from the point of being exempted or not in regard to participation in Holy Struggle, there have been defined some proper degrees. At first, it says:

"There is no fault in the weak and the sick and those who find nothing to spend..."

These three groups are excused in any law, and intellect and logic also prove their being exempted. It is certain that in no instance Islamic laws are separate from intellect and logic.

After that, the Qur'ān has stated an important condition for the commandment of their being excused. It implies that this is in the condition that they refrain no sincere benediction unto Allah and His Messenger.

"...so long as they are true to Allah and to His Messenger..."

They should encourage the strivers through their own words and behaviour toward Holy Struggle, and to weaken the enemies' spirit so that they prepare the elementary factors of their failure.

Later, in order to state the reason of this subject, it says that such people are some benevolent men, and there is no way for blaming, scorning, punishing and taking to task the good-doers. The verse says:

"...There is no way (to blame) against the good-doers..."

At the end of the verse, as another reason for these three groups being exempted, the Qur'ān points to Allah's two great attributes by saying:

"...Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 92

وَلا عَلَى الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَآ أَتَوْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ قُلْتَ لآ أَجِدُ مَآ أَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ تَوَلَّوا وَأَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ حَزَناً أَلاَّ يَجِدُوا مَا يُنفِقُونَ

92. ***"Nor (is the task) on those unto whom, when they come unto you to provide them with mounts, you said: 'I do not find means to carry you,' they turned back and their eyes overflowed***

with tears of sorrow, for they did not find that which they should spend."

In this verse, the Qur'ān refers to the fourth group of those who were also exempted from the Holy Struggle. This group had no means to ride on and to participate in the Holy Struggle.

They went to the Prophet (S) to obtain it, but he did not have any mount to give them for carrying them. They had to come back from him while their eyes were full of tears. This tear was for the sorrow which originated from the lack of means to spend it in the way of Allah. The holy verse says:

"Nor (is the task) on those unto whom, when they come unto you to provide them with mounts, you said: 'I do not find means to carry you,' they turned back and their eyes overflowed with tears of sorrow, for they did not find that which they should spend."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 93

إِنَّمَا السَّبِيلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَسْتَأْذِنُونَكَ وَهُمْ أَغْنِيَآءُ رَضُوا بِاَن يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ وَطَبَعَ اللّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لايَعْلَمُونَ

93. ***"Verily the way (to blame) is only against those who ask you permission (to stay behind) while they are rich. They are content to be with those who stay back, and Allah has set a seal on their hearts, thus they do not know (what they have missed)."***

In this verse, the Qur'ān explains the fifth group, i.e. those who have never been excused with Allah, and will not be excused in the future either.

It implies that the way of blame and punishment is open only to those who ask you permission not to participate in the Holy Struggle while they are rich and are in welfare. They possess enough possibilities and necessary means for this affair. The verse says:

"Verily the way (to blame) is only against those who ask you permission (to stay behind) while they are rich..."

Then it adds that this disgrace is enough for them that they contented to stay back in Medina with the persons who were feeble, sick, and handicapped and to be deprived from the honour of participation in the battle-field. It says:

"...They are content to be with those who stay back..."

And also this retribution is enough for them that, because of their own ugly deeds, Allah has ceased them from the ability of contemplation and comprehension by sealing their hearts. Therefore, they do not know what kind of excellent ranks they have lost. The verse continues saying:

"...and Allah has set a seal on their hearts, thus they do not know (what they have missed)."

The strong and exalted spirits of the strivers of Islam are vividly made clear from this verse. It illustrates how they preferred and preceded the honour of attending in the battlefield and the honour of martyrdom to any other honours.

This very fact makes manifest one of the important factors of the rapid expansion of Islam at that time and our retardation in this age.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 94

يَعْتَذِرُونَ إِلَيْكُمْ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ قُلْ لاتَعْتَذِرُوا لَن نُؤْمِنَ لَكُمْ قَدْ نَبَّأَنَا اللّهُ مِنْ أَخْبَارِكُمْ وَسَيَرَى اللّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ ثُمَّ
تُرَدُّونَ إِلَى عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

94*. “They will offer you excuses when you return to them. Say: ‘Do not make excuses. We will never believe you. Allah has informed us of tidings about you. And, Allah and His Messenger will see your work, then you will be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the visible, and He will inform you of what you used to do’.”*

The hypocrites, who, at any rate, did not participate in the Battle of Tabūk, ceaselessly brought excuses and pretexts to the Prophet of Islam (S). This verse, rejecting their seeking for excuses, indicates that when the Muslims would return from the war, the hypocrites would come to them and bring some excuses.

The Muslims should say to them not to make not to excuse, since they would not believe them and Allah had informed them of their circumstance. The verse says:

“They will offer you excuses when you return to them. Say: ‘Do not make excuses. We will never believe you. Allah has informed us of tidings about you…”

This meaning is a hint to the fact that, by means of the verses of the Qur’ān and revelation, Allah (s.w.t.) discovered the plots and secrets of the hypocrites and He informed His Messenger (S) of their actions, so that the Prophet (S) knew that those excuses were made only to confuse the matter.

They did not have a proper and safe belief in Allah and the religion. And their absence in the Holy Struggle was for the same reason.

Then, in the continuation of the verse, the Qur’ān says:

“…And, Allah and His Messenger will see your work, then you will be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the visible, and He will inform you of what you used to do’.”

That moment of the return to the Knower, which is mentioned in the verse, is the time of death, when the

curtains will be utterly removed and human beings will understand the facts.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 95

سَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللّهِ لَكُمْ إِذَا انقَلَبْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ لِتُعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمْ فَاَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ رِجْسٌ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ جَزَآءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

95. ***"They will swear to you by Allah, when you turn back unto them that you renounce them*** (***their sin***). ***So renounce them, for they are indeed filth and their abode is Hell, a recompense for what they used to earn."***

After the occurrence of the Battle of Tabūk, when the Muslims returned to Medina, those hypocrites who had not participated in that Battle, in order to justify their action, came to them swearing that they had plausible excuse. This oath was for that the Muslims might not blame them.

The Qur'ān informs the Muslims in this verse that when they return from the Holy Struggle, the hypocrites come to them and swear by Allah to justify their deed in order that the Muslims renounce them their sin and do not blame them.

But Muslims are commanded to turn away from them, i.e. as a protest to their ugly work, they must avoid speaking with them. Then the Qur'ān states its reason such that, as a result of their own action, their abode is Hell.

However, renouncement is often fulfilled either upon nobility and connivance, or upon wrath and heedlessness. In this verse, it has been used in both senses. The hypocrites asked for remittal and pardoning their fault, and Allah had commanded the Muslims to have a wrathful renouncement unto them.

When the Messenger of Allah (S) returned from the Battle of Tabūk, he told the Muslims not to associate with the hypocrites who abandoned going to the Battle.[1]

But some commentators have said that renouncement is based on remittal and pardoning, without blaming them or scorning them. It should be done in a manner that you do not attest them in what they bring excuse, but by silence and negation you do reject them, because they are filthy and it appropriates that you do not approach them. So, their abode is Hell for what they have done.[2]

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 96

يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ لِتَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ فإِن تَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ فإِنَّ اللّهَ لايَرْضَى عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ

96*. “They swear to you that you may be pleased with them. But even if you are pleased with them, yet surely Allah will not be pleased with the transgressing people.”*

In this verse, the Qur’ān continues the subject matter of the previous verse. It says that the hypocrites swear so that the Muslims may be pleased with them. But they must be aware that even if they are pleased with them, Allah will not be pleased with the mischievous ones. The verse says:

“They swear to you that you may be pleased with them. But even if you are pleased with them, yet surely Allah will not be pleased with the transgressing people.”

This statement means that even when you become pleased with such hypocrites, it does not benefit them in their state, because Allah is not pleased with them.

However, this meaning is a warning, indicating that when Allah is not pleased with a person, a believer should not be pleased with him either, and he must cease his communication with him.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 97

الاَعْرَابُ أَشَدُّ كُفْراً وَنِفَاقاً وَأَجْدَرُ أَلاَّ يَعْلَمُوا حُدُودَ مَآ أَنْزَلَ اللّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

97*. “The Bedouins are more hard in disbelief and hypocrisy, and more apt not to know the limits of what Allah has sent down to His Messenger, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”*

This verse attracts the believers’ attention to this matter that the hypocrites of the Bedouins, who lived in deserts and outside of Medina, were more intense than the hypocrites of the citizens settled inside Medina, from the point of disbelief and hypocrisy.

They were also in a lower standard from the point of understanding and perceiving the ordinances and the limits of Allah which had been revealed to the Prophet (S). That was why they opposed more to embrace Islam. The verse says:

“The Bedouins are more hard in disbelief and hypocrisy, and more apt not to know the limits of what Allah has sent down to His Messenger…”

Then, at the end of the verse, the Qur’ān adds that ***‘Allah is All-Knowing’***, viz., He is aware of the reality of the state of everyone; and He is ***‘All-Wise’***, viz., the revelations He sends down are all formed upon wisdom and cognizance. It says:

“…and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 98

وَمِنَ الاَعْرَابِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مَايُنْفِقُ مَغْرَماً وَيَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمُ الدَّوَآئِرَ عَلَيْهِمْ دَآئِرَةُ السَّوْءِ وَاللّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

98. ***"And of the Bedouins are those who take what they spend to be a loss, and they wait for calamities against you, on them shall be an evil calamity; and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."***

In this verse, the Qur'ān states that some of the Bedouins consider that what they spend in charity is as a kind of loss and a damage. They are hypocrites, of course, and they do not spend believably. They spend for protecting the outward aspect and in the form of hypocritical acts, so they know it as a loss for themselves. They do not believe in the rewards of the Hereafter.

"And of the Bedouins are those who take what they spend to be a loss..."

Moreover, those hypocrites who lived at the time of the Prophet (S) waited for arriving some horrible calamities against the Muslims. They awaited the death of the Prophet (S) momentally, or that the Muslims be defeated and scattered so that they could make their inward aims manifest freely.

This fact was proved after the departure of the Prophet of Islam (S) when some parties of those hypocrites turned away from Islam and apostatized. The verse continues saying:

"...and they wait for calamities against you..."

The holy verse, after mentioning the expectation of the hypocrites, curses them and says:

"...on them shall be an evil calamity..."

Then it also continues saying:

"...and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."

That is, Allah hears all their words, and He (s.w.t.) is aware of all their secrets.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 99

وَمِنَ الاَعْرَابِ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِاللّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَيَتَّخِذُ مَايُنفِقُ قُرُبَاتٍ عِندَ اللّهِ وَصَلَوَاتِ الرَّسُولِ أَلآ إِنَّهَا قُرْبَةٌ لَهُمْ سَيُدْخِلُهُمُ اللّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ إِنَّ اللّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

99. ***"And of the Bedouins are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and take what they spend to be (means of) the nearness to Allah and the prayers (blessings) of the Messenger. Look! Surely they are means of nearness for them. Soon Allah will admit them into His mercy.***

Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

Opposite to those Bedouins of Arab who were hypocrites, the Qur’ān refers to another group of the Bedouins who had a true Faith in Allah and the Day of Resurrection. This reference is for the reason that no one considers that all of the Bedouins were always totally hypocrites and disbelievers. The verse says:

“And of the Bedouins are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day…”

As a result of the Faith they had in Allah, this group of Bedouins of Arabs spent their wealth in charity in the way of Allah. So, whatever they spent in charity they assumed it as a means of nearness to Allah and, also, an attraction of the prayers of the Prophet (S). The verse continues saying:

“…and take what they spend to be (means of) the nearness to Allah and the prayers (blessings) of the Messenger…”

These Bedouins believed that spending properties in the way of Allah caused both the nearness to Allah and that the Prophet (S) would pray for them; since the Prophet (S) used to pray for any one of the believers who spent in charity in the way of Allah, and therefore, he encouraged him thereby.

The behaviour of these faithful Bedouins can be compared with that of the hypocritical Bedouins. These considered what they spent in charity as a means of nearness to Allah, while the former group, as was explained in the previous verses, considered their charities a kind of loss, since they did not believe in Allah’s rewards.

Therefore, in the continuation of the holy verse, the Qur’ān says:

“…Look! Surely they are means of nearness for them…”

There is no distance, of course, between Man and the Lord. Then the purpose of this ***‘nearness’*** is ***‘a spiritual nearness’***, and that a faithful person ought to create the epithets of Allah inside himself.

It is in this case that he may be involved in the mercy and favour of Allah (s.w.t.), and can enjoy His rewards. We see that in this holy very verse, after confirming that their charities cause the nearness to Him, the Qur’ān immediately says:

“…Soon Allah will admit them into His mercy…”

And, by this phrase, the Qur’ān states the fruit of the nearness to Allah. So, the verse concludes as follows:

“…Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

1. Books of by Imam Fakhr-i-Rāzi, Marāqi, Majma‘-ul-Bayān, Al-Minār, Fi-Zilāl, Atyab-ul-Bayān, Al- Muharrir- ul-Wajiz
2. Tafsir-i-Qarā’ib-ul-Qur’ān, As-Sāfi, Jawāmi‘-ul-Jāmi‘, Al-Mizān, and Manhaj-us-Sādiqin

Section 13: The Hypocrites Among the Bedouins

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 100

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الاَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالاَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرِي تَحْتَهَا الاَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَداً ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيم

100. ***“And the foremost, the first of the Emigrants and the Helpers, and those who followed them in goodness, Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow wherein shall they abide forever. That is the great success.”***

Following the content meaning of the former holy verse which was upon the circumstances of the disbelievers and hypocrites, this verse refers to the true believers of the Muslims, and divides them into three definite groups.

1. The first group are those who were the foremost and the first in Islam, who emigrated. The verse says:

“And the foremost, the first of the Emigrants...”

2. Those who were first in helping both the Prophet (S) and his companions of the Emigrants.

“...and the Helpers...”

3. The third group are mentioned those who followed them from the point of goodness, and by their good deeds and embracing Islam, Emigration, and helping the Prophet’s religion, they joined them.

“...and those who followed them in goodness...”

It is interesting that all the Islamic scholars have unanimously said that the first person of women who embraced Islam was Khadijah, the faithful and devoted wife of the Prophet (S).

And, as for men, all the scholars and commentators of the Shi‘ites together, and a large number of the Sunnite scholars have confirmed that Ali-ibn-Abi Tālib (as) was the first one who accepted the invitation of the Prophet of Islam (S) [1]

After mentioning these three groups, the Qur’ān says:

“...Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him...”

The pleasure of Allah from them is for their Faith and the good deeds they have done; and that they are well-pleased with Allah is for the extraordinary various important rewards He has bestowed upon them.

This sentence contains all the devine merits, (the material and spiritual merits of body and soul) yet, as an emphasis and statement of expansion after epitome, it adds:

"...and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow..."

Among the privileges of this Divine bounty is that it is eternal, as the verse itself says:

"...wherein shall they abide forever..."

This condition is a great triumph for a person. The holy verse continues saying:

"...That is the great success."

What a success can be better than this that man, a mortal, feels that his Lord, the Exalted, his worshiped, and his Master is well-pleased with him and has accepted the whole deeds he has done?

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 101

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُم مِنَ الاَعْرَابِ مُنَافِقُونَ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ مَرَدُوا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لا تَعْلَمُهُمْ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ سَنُعَذِّبُهُم مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَى عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ

101*. "And among the Bedouins around you there are hypocrites, and from among the people of Medina* (*there are also some who*) *have grown bold in hypocrisy. You do not know them,* (*but*) *We know them. Soon We will punish them twice, then they will be turned back to a grievous chastisement."*

The Qur'ān turns the discussion again unto the deeds of the hypocrites and their mischievous groups. It says:

"And among the Bedouins around you there are hypocrites..."

This phrase means that you should be aware and watch the hypocrites who are outside your city and be careful of their dangerous activities.

Then, it adds that, in Medina itself, and from among the people of this city, there are also some persons who have stretched hypocrisy as far as the limit of disobedience, and they are severely steadfast unto it so that they are experienced in it. The verse says:

"...and from among the people of Medina* (*there are also some who*) *have grown bold in hypocrisy..."

This meaning, which is seen in the abovementioned verse about the hypocrites of ‘inside’ and those of ‘outside’, maybe refers to this aspect that the inside hypocrites are more experienced, and naturally more dangerous, in their job than the outside hypocrites. Therefore, the Muslims must intensively be careful of them, although they should not neglect the outside hypocrites either.

That is why, immediately after that, Allah says:

“…You do not know them,* (*but*) *We know them…”

This indication, of course, is to the ordinary and common knowledge of the Prophet (S), but there is no contrust that he (S) becomes utterly aware of their secrets through Divine revelation and by His teaching.

At the end of the verse, the Qur□n announces the grievous punishment of this group as follows:

“…Soon We will punish them twice, then they will be turned back to grievous chastisement…”

Twice in punishment is, at first, their disgraces among people, and the other is to give up their lives with hardship which includes both their spiritual and bodily chastisements.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 102

وءَاخَرُونَ اعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلاً صَالِحاً وءَاخَرَ سَيِّئاً عَسَى اللّهُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللّهَ غَفُورٌرَحِيمٌ

102. *“And* (*there are*) *othes who have confessed to their sins. They have mixed a righteous deed and an evil one. Maybe Allah will turn* (*mercifully*) *to them* (*and accept their repentance*)*. Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”*

Several persons from among the companions of the Prophet (S) refrained from taking part in the Battle of Tab□k, not hypocritically, of course, but for the sake of loving life.

When the concerning critical verses were revealed, they regreted and, as a sign of repentance, they had fastened themselves on a pillar in the Prophet’s Mosque.

They kept on being in that state until when Allah accepted their repentance and the Messenger of Allah (S) unfastened the ropes from them and they were forgiven. The verse says:

“And* (*there are*) *othes who have confessed to their sins. They have mixed a righteous deed and an evil one. Maybe Allah will turn* (*mercifully*) *to them* (*and accept their repentance*)*. Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

After that, as gratitude for this matter, they offered all their properties to the Prophet (S), but he took a

part of the properties to spend upon the expediencies of the Muslims, and returned the rest to them.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 103

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِم بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ وَاللّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

103. ***“Take alms out of their possessions to cleanse them and purify them thereby, and pray for them, surely your prayers are a comfort for them, and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”***

This holy verse points to one of the important Islamic ordinances, viz. alms. As a general rule, it tells the Prophet (S) to take alms tax from their properties. The verse says:

“Take alms out of their possessions...”

The Divine command is a clear evidence for that the chief of the Islamic government can take ‘the alms tax’ from people. It is not in a manner that he must wait until if they wish they pay it by themselves, and, otherwise, they do not pay it.

Then, the Qur’ān refers to two parts of the psychological, ethical, and social philosophy of almsgiving. It says:

“...to cleanse them and purify them thereby...”

Almsgiving cleanse them from the bad qualities, purifies them from mammunism and stinginess, and grows the plant of philanthropy, generosity and attentiveness to people’s rights in them.

Moreover, by the fulfilment of this divine commandment, you may wipe out the imputies and mischieves which come into being inside the society because of poverty, class division, and the deprivation of some groups therein. Thus, you may clean the scene of the society from these vices.

Then, it implies that when they pay alms tax, you do pray for them and send blessing unto them. The verse says:

“...and pray for them...”

This situation indicates that even for the fulfilment of the obligatory duties, people should be thanked and admired. They should be specially encouraged mentally and spiritually. Some Islamic traditions denote that when people brought alms tax to the presence of the Prophet (S), he used to pray for them by saying:

“O’ Allah! Give them peace.”

Then the Qur’ān adds:

“...surely your prayers are a comfort for them...”

It is by the glow of this prayer that the grace and blessing of Allah will be sent down over their selves and spirits, in a form that they may feel it. So, at the end of the verse, the Qur’ān says:

“...and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

That is, Allah both hears the prayers of the Prophet (S) and is aware of the intentions of the givers of alms tax.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 104

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَأْخُذُ الصَّدَقَاتِ وَأَنَّ اللّهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

104*. “Do they not know that Allah is He Who accepts the repentance from His servants and takes the alms and that Allah is He Who is Oft-Pardoning, Merciful?”*

In view of the fact that some sinners, like the hypocrites concerning the Battle of Tabūk, urged the Prophet (pbuh) to accept their repentance, in this verse the Qur’ān points to this subject indicating that the acceptance of repentance is not something that the Prophet (S) does by himself. The verse says:

“Do they not know that Allah is He Who accepts the repentance from His servants...”

Allah not only accepts the repentances but also takes the alms or the charities which are given to Allah as the atonement of sins and for nearness to Him. The verse continues saying:

“...and takes the alms...”

There is no doubt that the takers of alms and charities are either the Prophet (S) and the immaculate Imams (as), who are the leaders of the Muslims, or the needy and deserving persons.

But, since the hands of the Prophet (S) and those of the true leaders and the hands of deserving persons are counted as the hand of Allah (s.w.t), it seems that Allah (s.w.t) takes these alms.

In a tradition narrated from the Prophet (S), we recite:

“*Verily the alms will reach to the hand of Allah before it reaches to the beggar’s hand.”* [2]

Moreover, in an Islamic tradition, it has been announced that the angels receive all the deeds of man, except alms which directly reach to the hand of Allah.

At the end of the verse, as an emphasis, the Qurān says:

“...and that Allah is He Who is Oft-Pardoning, Merciful?”

From the content of this holy verse, it is so understood that the forgiveness of the faults and accepting the repentance is only up to Allah (s.w.t.). Thus, even the Prophet (S) is not rightful to accept repentances, much less are the monks and the authorities of churches. This rank belongs only to Allah (s.w.t.).

“...Allah is He Who accepts the repentance...”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 105

وَقُلِ اعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَى عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

105*. “And say: ‘Act you* (*as you will*)*! Allah will see your work and* (*so will*) *His Messenger and the believers, then soon you will be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the visible, and He will inform you of what you used to do’.”*

This verse announces that Allah, His Messenger and the believers are cognizant of what we do. It states the very belief of the Shi‘ite in ‘presenting deeds’ to the saints of Allah. This presentation may be performed daily, weekly, or monthly.

So, if our deeds are good, the saints of Allah will be happy with us; and if they are bad, they will become worried and sad. Belief in this ‘presentation of deeds’ is effective in creating piety and modesty in us, and contains an extraordinary educative role.

The verse says:

“And say: ‘Act you* (*as you will*)*! Allah will see your work and* (*so will*) *His Messenger and the believers, then soon you will be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the visible, and He will inform you of what you used to do’.”

Imam S�diq (as) said:

“O people! Do not annoy the Messenger of Allah by your sin! ”

As some Islamic traditions indicate the objective meaning of /mu’m‘n�n/ (the believers), mentioned in this verse, is the Immacate Imams whom Allah makes aware of our deeds. 3

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 106

وَءَاخَرُونَ مُرْجَوْنَ لأَمْرِ اللّهِ إِمَّا يُعَذِّبُهُمْ وإِمَّا يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

106*. “And* (*there are*) *others expecting Allah’s decree: either He shall chastise them, or turn to them* (*mercifully*)*, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”*

The Qur’□nic term /murj□n/ is derived from /’irj□’/ in the sense of ‘delay and stop’, a delay which is acompanied with ‘hope and expectation’. The verse says:

“And (***there are***) ***others expecting Allah’s decree…”***

According to the Islamic literature, the verse is concerning to the murderers of Hadrat-i-Hamzah, or Ja‘far-i-Tayy□r, who were remorsed from their actions against these two. Or it refers to those persons who did not participate in the Battle of Tab□k and simply regretted and did not confess it by their tongues.

However, Allah is capable to either forgive the sinners or punish them. The verse continues saying:

“…either He shall chastise them, or turn to them (***mercifully***)***…”***

The wrath or grace of Allah is based on knowledge and wisdom, not upon vengeance. The verse concludes:

“…and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 107

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مَسْجِداً ضِرَاراً وَكُفْراً وَتَفْرِيقاً بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وإِرْصَاداً لِمَنْ حَارَبَ اللّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَيَحْلِفُنَّ إِنْ
أَرَدْنَآ إِلاَّ الْحُسْنَى وَاللّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

107*. “And those who built a mosque to cause harm* (*to Islam*) *and for unbelief, and to divide the believers, and* (*as*) *an ambush for those who fought Allah and His Messenger aforetime; and they will surely swear: ‘We purposed naught save good,’ but Allah testifies that verily they are liars.”*

In this verse, the Qur’□n has made manifest one of the great plots of the hypocrites of Medina. The event was as follows:

Twelve persons from among those hypocrites built a place under the title of ‘a mosque’. They built it with the recommendation of Ab□-‘□mir-R□hib who was a harsh enemy of Islam from before. He lived in Syria.

In order to make that mosque formal, the hypocrites went to the Prophet (S) and asked him to come into that mosque and pray therein. They said that they had built the mosque for those Muslims who were weak and could not attend the Prophet’s Mosque or Quba Mosque from some far places to pray; so they could pray in that mosque.

At that time, the Prophet (S) was going to travel for the Battle of Tabūk and had not time enough to go there. Therefore, he told them to wait until he would come back from his journey and then he might establish prayer in that mosque.

When the Prophet (S) returned from the Battle of Tabūk, they had made that mosque ready. So, they came to the Prophet (S) and asked him to pray in that mosque. It was at the same time that these very holy verses were sent down and made their plot manifest.

The revelations made it evident that those hypocrites aimed to harm the religion of Islam under the name of the mosque. That was why the Prophet of Allah (S) sent several of his companions to ruin and burn that mosque.

They were Mālik-ibn-Dikhsham, Mu‘an-ibn-‘Āmir-ibn-Sakn, and Wahshi. The command of the Prophet (S) was obeyed, and later the site of that mosque was used as a place of rubbishes in that locality.

In this verse, the Qur’ān indicates that the hypocrites pursued four aims by building that mosque:

1. To cause harm to Islam and the Muslims.

2. To create disbelief in Allah and His Messenger (S) among people, and that the foundations of infidelity to be strengthened in that mosque.

3. To disperse the Muslims. The Muslims usually attended in one mosque, and there was a unity among them.

4. To supply a lurking-place for the one who was fighting against Allah and His Prophet, viz. ‘Abū-‘Āmir-i-Rāhib. [4] He was a man who became a Christian in the Age of Ignorance and obtained a high rank there.

When the Prophet of Islam (S) migrated to Medina, as a result of his envy,’Abū-‘Āmir always applied his hostility against him (S), and finally he ran away toward the polytheists of Mecca.

He accompanied them in the Battle of’Uhud, and, at last, he escaped to Syria in order to attract the help of Roman army and to fight against the Prophet of Islam (S).

The hypocrites of Medina had built that mosque with Abū-‘Āmir’s recommendation and were waiting for him to come with the Roman troops and to use that mosque as his station for invadiny the Muslims. The verse says:

“And those who built a mosque to cause harm (to Islam) and for unbelief, and to divide the believers, and (as) an ambush for those who fought Allah and His Messenger aforetime...”

In order to deceive the Muslims, the hypocrites swore that they desired nothing but good for them, and that their aim was to help and serve the Muslims. But, by narrating their saying, the Qur’ān says:

“...and they will surely swear: ‘We purposed naught save good,’ but Allah testifies that verily they are liars.”

In this way and by sending down these verses, Allah made their great plot manifest, and futiled the evil plan of those hypocrites.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 108

لاَتَقُمْ فِيهِ أَبَداً لَمَسْجِدٌ أُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوَى مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَن تَقُومَ فِيهِ فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَن يَتَطَهَّرُوا وَاللّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَّهِّرِينَ

108. ***“Never do stand therein (to pray). Certainly a mosque founded on piety from the first day is worthier that you stand in it (for prayer). Therein are men who love to purify themselves, and Allah loves the purified ones.”***

The Prophet (S) is commanded in this holy verse not to stand in that mosque at all, i.e. he should not establish prayer there. The holy verse says:

“Never do stand therein (to pray)...”

Then the Qur’ān compares this mosque with the Prophet’s Mosque or Qubā Mosque, and says:

“...Certainly a mosque founded on piety from the first day is worthier that you stand in it (for prayer)...”

The objective meaning of this mosque was either Qubā Mosque, or the Prophet’s Mosque, or any mosque which had been founded on the basis of piety and belief in Allah (s.w.t.); and the purpose of the phrase ‘***the first day***’ was that, from the first day, the aim of its founders had been Allah.

The Qur’ān adds that, in this mosque, which has been established on the basis of piety, there are some men who desire to purify themselves, and Allah likes the purified ones.

The purpose of this purification is a spiritual purification which has been rendered into being far from sins and being studious in doing divine obligations. It also envelops the purification of both clothes and body.

The verse continues saying:

“...Therein are men who love to purify themselves, and Allah loves the purified ones.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 109

أَفَمَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَى تَقْوَى مِنَ اللّهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ خَيْرٌ أَم مَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَى شَفَا جُرُفٍ هَارٍ فَانْهَارَ بِهِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ وَاللّهُ لاَيَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

109*. “Is he, therefore, better who has laid his foundation on fear of Allah and* (*His*) *good pleasure, or he who has laid his foundation on the brink of a crumbling hollowed bank that tumbles with him into the Fire of Hell? And Allah does not guide the unjust people.”*

After explaining the story of the mosque of dissension, the Qur’ān compares between those two groups: a group who built Qubā Mosque and the Prophet’s Mosque, and the group who built the mosque of dissension.

The foundation of the work of the first group was on piety and the pleasure of Allah, while the result of the work of the second group was blazing Fire and falling into Hell.

The basis of the work of the first group is piety and obtaining the pleasure of Allah, and they have no other aim from it. Are these people better or the second group whose basis of work is upon the brink of a crumbling hollowed bank?

They will fall into the Fire of Hell by the building they have built. In other words, the building, which they have established, is at the edge of the precipice of the Fire of Hell which will suddenly ruins into it.

The verse says:

“Is he, therefore, better who has laid his foundation on fear of Allah and* (*His*) *good pleasure, or he who has laid his foundation on the brink of a crumbling hollowed bank that tumbles with him into the Fire of Hell? And Allah does not guide the unjust people.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 110

لا يَزَالُ بُنْيَانُهُمُ الَّذِي بَنَوْا رِيبَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلاَّ أَن تَقَطَّعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

110*. “The building which they built will not cease to be* (*a source of*) *disquiet in their hearts unless their hearts be cut into pieces, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”*

By this holy verse, the Qur’ān implies that the building which the hypocrites have built is always a source of suspicion in their hearts. This suspicion is with them until their hearts be cut into pieces, viz. when they die.

The purpose is that the instruction of the Prophet (S) that the mosque of dissension to be ruined has increased in the hatred of their hearts. This hatred or rancoure and disquiet towards the ordinances of Islam will be with them until the time they die and their hearts be cut into pieces.

This meaning denotes that they will never believe in the Truth and will die with the same state of hypocrisy and disbelief.

The verse says:

“The building which they built will not cease to be** (**a source of**) **disquiet in their hearts unless their hearts be cut into pieces...”

Then, at the end of the verse, the Qur’n mentions two attributes of Allah. They are: All-Knowing, All-Wise, which means Allah is aware of their status and the command He has ordained about the mosque of dissension has been done wisely. The verse says:

“...and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”

1. Al-Qadir, vol. 3, pp. 220 to 243; Ihqq-ul-Haqq, vol. 3, pp. 114 to 120; Tafsir-ul-Qurtubi, vol. 5, p. 3075 (narrated from Mustadrak-I-Hkim), and some other books.
2. Tafsir-us_Sfi and Tafsir-ul-Burhn (under the holy verse).
3. Tafsir-ul-Burhn, and Tafsir-us-Sfi (under the holy verse), ’Usl-i-Kfi, vol. 1, p. 171, and Bihr-ul-’Anwr, by ‘Allmah Majlisi.
4. ’Ab-‘mir was the father of Hanzalah

Section 14: The True Believers

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 111

إِنَّ اللّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعْداً عَلَيْهِ حَقّاً
فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَالإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْءانِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا بِبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُم بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

111. ***“Verily Allah has bought from the believers their souls and their Properties for Paradise to be theirs: they fight in the way of Allah, so they slay and they are slain,** (**this is**) **a promise binding on Him in the Turah, and the Evangel and the Qur’n. And who is more faithful to his promise than Allah? Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made; and that is the great success.”***

In many occurrences of the Qur’n, whenever it says something concerning the infidels, or polytheists, or hypocrites, immediately next to that, it refers to the believers in order that a comparison between these two groups be performed.

Here, after delivering some explanations about the hypocrites and their evil conspiracies, the Qur’n refers to the believers and their specialties.

In this verse, by applying a delicate similie, the Qur’ān points to the intensive love of the believers to Holy Struggle in the way of Allah. It similizes their deed to a transaction and a bargain. Usually, there are four essential elements in every bargain.

These four factors are: seller, customer, the ware to be transactioned, and price. In this splendid spiritual transaction, the seller is a believer, the customer is Allah, the ware to be transactioned is the soul and the wealth of the believers, and its price is the etetrnal Paradise.

These believers fight in the way of Allah where they slay and are slain. Whether they defeat the enemy or they suffer martyrdom, both are counted felicity for them, and both of them are sought by a belirver. The verse says:

“Verily Allah has bought from the believers their souls and their properties for Paradise to be theirs: they fight in the way of Allah, so they slay and they are slain…”

Imam Sādiq (as) in a tradition says that there is no price for your bodies save Pradise. Then you should not sell your selves for less than Paradise.1

Next to that, the Qur’ān introduces the document of this transaction, where it says:

“…(this is) a promise binding on Him in the Turah, and the Evangel and the Qur’ān…”

In all these Heavenly Books, believers have been promised Paradise, and the texts of these Divine Books are counted as a document for the believers in this bargain. 2

Then, as a further emphasis, the Qur’ān asks:

“…And who is more faithful to his promise than Allah?…”

Therefore, regarding that you have transactioned the best bargain and with the most faithful One, Who is Allah, you must be very happy with this transaction, and this is the great felicity. The verse says:

“…Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made; and that is the great success.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 112

التَّائِبُونَ الْعَابِدُونَ الْحَامِدُونَ السَّائِحُونَ الرَّاكِعُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ الأَمِرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّاهُونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ
لِحُدُودِ اللّهِ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

112. “(The believing strivers are those who) turn repentant (to Allah), worship (Him), make a journey, bow, prostrate (in prayer), bid what is right and forbid what is wrong, and keep the limits of Allah, and give good news to the believers.”

Besides the aforementioned attribute, i.e. striving in the way of Allah, the Qur’ān defines nine epithets for such believers, who have bargained with their Lord. Thus, counting that one, they will be totally ten attributes. These nine epithets are as follows.

1. *“(**The believing strivers are those who**) **turn repentant** (**to Allah**)...”*

Whenever they commit a fault, they immediately regret and turn to Allah and repent.

2. *“...**worship** (**Him**)...”*

They always worship the Lord and assume worshipping as an obligatory manner upon themselves. Worshipping Allah is a sign of good Faith in a high level. It trains the soul of man and furnishes his heart and spirit with a peculiar serenity and luminosity.

3. *“...**praise** (**Him**)...”*

They always praise Allah for the bounties He has bestowed upon them, and they do perform His praise and tribute.

4. *“...**make a journey**...”*

That is, in the way of Allah and for fulfilling their religions duties, they are always busy moving and endeavouring. For instance, they pave a distance to go into a mosque to establish their prayer, or, in order to settle reconciliation between two Muslims, they go to their houses. Or, even for taking an example from the traces of the ancient people, they make a journey.

It must also be noted that some of the commentators have taken the Qur’ānic word /sā’ihūn/ in the sense of ‘fasting’.

5. *“...**bow**...”*

They bow down in the prayer before Allah. It is such as bowing, humility, and veneration.

6. *“...**Prostrate** (**in prayer**)...”*

They put their foreheads on the ground of abjectness before Allah, and this is the utmost humiliation in front of Him. The Qur’ān has referred to only these two acts from the whole acts of prayer, because the most distinguished actions in prayer are ‘bowing and prostration’.

7. *“...**bid what is right**...”*

Besides that they themselves are generally good, they invite others to goodness, too. They are always the encouragers of others in doing good deeds.

8. *“...**and forbid what is wrong**...”*

They not only themselves do not approach committing sins, but also dissude others from perpetration of vices and becoming polluted with wrong actions.

9. ***“...and keep the limits of Allah...”***

They ceaselessly try to protect the limits of the ordinances of Allah and not to transgress them. This epithet is one of the important qualities of a believer.

He must be careful of his own deeds and treatment, so that never he violates the religious laws and that the limits of religion not to be broken. This subject is of great importance, and it has been referred to in the Qur’ān, too. For example, Surah At-Talāq, No. 67, verse 1 says:

“...and whoever goes beyond the limits of Allah, he indeed does injustice to his own soul...”

Therefore, in order to protect the limits of Allah, we must both fight against the outward enemy and struggle for effacing the inward corruptions.

However, the first six epithets, out of the nine epithets mentioned in this verse, relate to the personal private life of a believer, which he ought to individually create in himself. Two epithets concern the social life of a believer; and the last epithet envelops all the duties of a believer, whether they are personal and social, including giving the obligatory rights.

Next to mentioning these nine epithets, in order to make the believers happy, the Qur’ān implies that such believers are always in goodness and felicity, and they have a good end. They will enter Paradise in the Hereafter. The verse continues saying:

“...and give good news to the believers.”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 113

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَن يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُوْلِي قُرْبَى مِن بَعْدِ مَاتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ

113. ***“It is not*** (***fit***) ***for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for the polytheists, after it has become clear to them that they are the inmates of Hell, even though they be*** (***their***) ***relatives.”***

At the beginning of the current Surah, the Qur’ān announced the immunity towards the polytheists. Then, there were some verses revealed upon the strictness and severity in action towards the polytheists. Now, the verse remarks that it is the same that the polytheists be alive or dead.

The verse says:

"It is not (fit) for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for the polytheists, after it has become clear to them that they are the inmates of Hell, even though they be (their) relatives."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 114

وَمَا كَانَ اسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَن مَّوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَهَا إِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ أَنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ لِّلَّهِ تَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ

114. *"And Abraham's seeking forgiveness for his father was only because of a promise he had made to him. So when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he declared himself quit of him. Verily Abraham was tenderhearted and forbearing."*

The previous verse denoted that the Prophet (S) and the true believers have not any pray for the polytheists, even though they are from their relatives. This verse answers to a doubious thing that why Abraham (as) gave his uncle a promise of asking for forgiveness, saying

"...I will pray to my Lord forgive you..." (Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 47).

The abovementioned verse indicates that Abraham's promise was with the hope that he might be guided, but when he saw that his uncle was in the state of disbelief, Abraham left asking forgiveness for him. The verse says:

"And Abraham's seeking forgiveness for his father was only because of a promise he had made to him. So when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he declared himself quit of him. Verily Abraham was tenderhearted and forbearing."

Another question is why Abraham prayed for him after his death, and he said:

"O' our Lord! Forgive me and my parents..." (Surah'Ibrāhim, No. 14, verse 41).

The answer to this question is that the Arabic word /wālid / is applied in the sense of the real father, while the term /'ab / is used in the sense of either father, teacher, father-in-law, and grand father.

This supplication of Abraham was for his real father, not for his uncle who was a polytheist. So, the Qur'ān in its eleven verses refers to Abraham's uncle by using the word /'ab / in order that it makes clear that Abraham (as) had been under the guardianship of what kind of a person, but he had not been affected.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 115

وَمَا كَانَ اللّهُ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْماً بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَاهُمْ حَتَّى يُبَيِّنَ لَهُم مَايَتَّقُونَ إِنَّ اللّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

115. ***“Nor is it Allah to lead a people astray after He has guided them, until He makes clear to them what they should beware of; verily Allah is aware of all thins.”***

This verse is about those persons who embraced Islam. But, before that all the ordinances of the religion would be sent down, they died. For instance, they prayed towards the first direction of Qiblah; or they asked forgiveness for their fathers while they were polytheists, and the ordinance upon these subjects had not been sent down in the time when they were living. The verse says:

“Nor is it Allah to lead a people astray after He has guided them, until He makes clear to them what they should beware of…”

The purpose of the holy phrase: ‘***to lead astray***’, here, means ‘to chastise’ and to take them into Hell. Therefore, they would not be chastised for the lack of performing those ordinances as long as they were not conveyed to them.

The reason of it is that they have believed in Islam and were not informed of those laws. So, punishing a person for the sake of the ordinances which were issued after them, is far from Allah’s justice; and, as ‘theoreticians in law’ say, chastisement without statement is not permissible.

At the end of the verse, the Qur’ān implies that Allah knows every thing. That is, He knows that He ought not to take to task a person for the crime he has not committed. The verse says:

“…verily Allah is aware of all things…”

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 116

إِنَّ اللّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّماوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَمَا لَكُم مِن دُونِ اللّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلا نَصِيرٍ

116. ***“Verily to Allah belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes to die, and, besides Allah, you have not any guardian or any helper.***

The words in this verse are upon the sovereignty and Power of Allah. The Qur’ān implies that the kingdom of the heavens and the earth is Allah’s. It is He Who gives life and causes to die, and you have not any friend, or any helper, save Allah.

Therefore, you should not rely on anybody besides Allah, and do not take the enemies of Allah as your shelter and your guardians, or that you be interested in them.

The verse says:

“Verily to Allah belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes to die, and, besides Allah, you have not any guardian or any helper.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 117

لَقَد تَابَ اللّهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالأَنْصَارِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ فِي سَاعَةِ الْعُسْرَةِ مِن بَعْدِمَا كَادَ يَزِيغُ قُلُوبُ فَرِيقٍ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّهُ بِهِمْ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

117*. "Allah has turned* (*mercifully*) *towards the Prophet and the Emigrants and the Helpers who followed him in the hour of difficulty, after the hearts of a part of them were about to swerve. Then He turned towards them* (*mercifully*)*. Verily He is Full of pity, Merciful to them."*

The process of the Battle of Tabūk was very hard and tiresome for the Prophet (S) and the Muslims. It was a difficult circumstance for them. On one side, the weather was terribly hot and, on the other side, it was the season of picking off the fruits.

The Muslims, who had laboured for one year, had to leave off their crops because they had not opportunity to gather them. And, on the other side, they were quietly poor, so that they had not enough food to eat.

An Islamic tradition denotes that they had not even enough water, and sometimes it happened that several of them only tasted a single date. In such hard and difficult circumstances, the Prophet (S) and the Emigrants and the Helpers (Ansār) went to Holy Struggle in the way of Allah.

In this verse, the Qur'ān has spoken of the grace, favour, regard and attentiveness of Allah upon the Muslims who went forth for Holy Struggle in that difficult situation. It says:

"Allah has turned (*mercifully*) *towards the Prophet and the Emigrants and the Helpers who followed him in the hour of difficulty…"*

The circumstance was so hard that some of the Muslims were incapable to bear it any longer and intended to return. But Allah promoted their spirit and they could tolerate and remained.

That is why the Qur'ān implies that this matter happened after that the hearts of some of them were nearly to swerve; but Allah caused them to succeed to repent, and He accepted their repentance since He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.

The verse continues saying:

"…after the hearts of a part of them were about to swerve. Then He turned towards them (*mercifully*)*. Verily He is Full of pity, Merciful to them."*

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 118

وَعَلَى الثَّلاَثَةِ الَّذِينَ خُلِّفُوا حَتَّى إِذَا ضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الاَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَظَنُّوا أَن لاَمَلْجَأَ مِنَ اللّهِ إِلاَّ إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَتُوبُوا إِنَّ اللّهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

118*. “And to the three who were left behind, until when the earth, with all its expanse, became narrow for them, and their own souls were straitened for them and they knew that there was no refuge from Allah save toward Him, then He turned towards them* (*mercifully*) *that they might turn* (*repentant unto Him*)*. Verily Allah is Oft-Pardoning, the Merciful.”*

As it was said before, in the course of the Battle of Tabūk, there were some hard and difficult conditions for Muslims, the most considerable of them was the heat of the weather and the approach of the time of harvest, specially fruits.

The hypocrites did not take part in this Battle, but the true Muslims, in any way they could, participated in the expedition of Tabūk, except those who were really excused. There were three persons among the Muslims who were absent from the expedition of the battle-field.

They were: ka‘b-ibn-Mālik, Marārat-ibn-Rabi‘, and Hilāl-ibn-’Umayya. They wanted to take part in the Holy Struggle, but they procrastinated and acted listlessly until when, at last, the Battle of Tabūk ended and the Prophet of Allah (S), acceeompanied with the Muslims, returned to Medina.

These three persons immediately presented themselves to the Prophet (S) and, after greeting, they asked about his health. But the Prophet (S) turned his face from them and did not speak with them.

When the Prophet (S) behaved like that, all the Muslims ceased communication with them and did not reply their questions and, as the Prophet (S) commanded, their wives also got separated from them.

Therefore, they felt themselves completely deserted and alone. This general strike against those three men caused that they were put in a tight straitened circumstance. In order to follow the command of the Prophet (S), they themselves did not speak even with each other either.

It has been said that this news reached the Romans. They secretly sent someone to those three persons and wanted them to go to Byzantine and live peacefully under the security of the government of Byzantine.

But those men, who were really Muslims, rejected that suggestion. They became very inconvenient of that happening by which the disbelievers expected them like that. So, they left the habitation in the city and stationed themselves in the wilderness inside the far deserts and mountains, and used to pray weeping and crying to Allah, asking Him to accept their repentance.

There passed fifty days in that state and, finally, their repentance was accepted. Allah announced that those three persons, who had disobeyed, were forgiven, and their instructive story became eternal in this verse.

A part of difficulties that they tolerated are stated in this revelation. It says:

"And to the three who were left behind, until when the earth, with all its expanse, became narrow for them, and their own souls were straitened for them and they knew that there was no refuge from Allah save toward Him, then He turned towards them (***mercifully***) ***that they might turn*** (***repentant unto Him***). ***Verily Allah is Oft-Pardoning, the Merciful."***

This event shows that if the people of a society be good, no vicious persons have any room in that society. They have to improve themselves. Thus, the action that the Muslims performed was the best style for improving the polluted minority, and a general strike against the vicious may make them improved.

1. Majma'-ul-Bayān, the Commentary
2. Strivers, Holy Struggle, and martyrdom have been counted worthy not only in Islam but also mentioned in the Turah and the Evangel: "...in the Turah and Evangel." Now, if this meaning is not found clearly in these two present Holy Books, it shows some distortations in them.

Section 15: To Be Always With the Truthful Ones

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 119

يَآ أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

119. ***"O you who have Faith! Be in awe of Allah and be*** (***always***) ***with the truthful ones."***

This verse addresses the believers and commands them to be in awe of Allah and to be pious. They should be always with the truthful ones, too.

Thus, the believers are commanded in this verse to do two things. The first is that they should be in awe of Allah, and it is evident that the state of being Godwary is very effective in man from the point of training. When a person is Godwary, he not only avoids committing disgrace actions, but also performs his duties.

The second is that they ought to be with the truthful ones, and to make friends with some ones who are generally truthful. They should, therefore, avoid making friends with the liars.

The verse says:

"O you who have Faith! Be in awe of Allah and be (always) with the truthful ones."

Accompaniment and agreement with truthful ones has an important function in the spiritual progression and the elevation of man. It makes him familiar with spiritual and ethical values, so far that the one himself will habitually become one of the truthful ones.

Some Islamic narrations denote that the objective meaning of '***the truthful ones***' is Muhammad and his Ahlul-Bayt (S), and the immaculate Imams (as). It is certain that they were the top of the truthful ones, and the Islamic community, as a duty, ought to follow them.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 120

مَاكَانَ لاَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُم مِنَ الاَعْرَابِ أَن يَتَخَلَّفُوا عَن رَسُولِ اللّهِ وَلا يَرْغَبُوا بِاَنْفُسِهِمْ عَن نَفْسِهِ ذَلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ لاَ
يُصِيبُهُمْ ظَمَأٌ وَلا نَصَبٌ وَلاَ مَخْمَصَةٌ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ وَلا يَطَأُونَ مَوْطِئاً يَغِيظُ الْكُفَّارَ وَلا يَنَالُونَ مِنْ عَدُوٍّ نَيْلاً إِلاَّ كُتِبَ
لَهُم بِهِ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ إِنَّ اللّهَ لايُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

120. ***"It is not for the people of Medina and the Bedouins around them to offend against the (command of) the Messenger of Allah, and to prefer their own lives to his life. That is because there afflicts them neither thirst, nor fatigue, nor hunger in the way of Allah, nor do they receive (any thing) from the enemy but a righteous deed is written for them on its account. Verily Allah does not waste the reward of the good-doers."***

The content of this verse is a kind of proclamation of general mobilization, and encouraging the Muslims toward participation in Holy Struggle and defending the life of the Prophet (S).

Through this verse, the Qur'ān warns the Muslims habitated in Medina and around it that they should not offend against the command of going to Holy Struggle beside the Prophet of Islam (S).

They must not think of their own lives dearer than the life of the Prophet (S) but they must defend his life before the enemy by their own lives.

It is evident that in battles the protection of the life of the commander is an important duty upon the army, since if the commander be killed the army may be defeated. In the battles that the Prophet (S) participated, he himself undertook the rank of a commander, and then, it was necessary for the Muslims to prefer his life to their own lives and to protect it from any danger.

Participation in Holy Struggle, of course, is a sufficient necessity, and when sufficient men, who can afford the defense and war, attend in the scene, it is not necessary for the rest to participate.

But, when the Prophet (S) or the Imam (as) invites a particular person to Holy Struggle, it will become an individual duty for him to obey, and its offense is not permissible.

At the advent of Islam, the number of Muslims was small, and when a war happened, the Holy Prophet (S) invited all those Muslims who had the ability of fighting to the battle– field and he proclaimed a general mobilization thereby.

Therefore, all of them should take part in the battle and no offending was allowed. This verse, which concerns to that very period, warns the people of Medina and its Bedouins; who were the only power of Islam, not to offend from the Holy Struggle beside the Prophet (S). The holy verse says:

"It is not for the people of Medina and the Bedouins around them to offend against the (command of) the Messenger of Allah, and to prefer their own lives to his life..."

Next to expressing this meaning, in the continuation of the verse, and in relation to the troops of Islam, the Qur'ān points out that Allah gives the strivers in His way some good rewards for the hardships they tolerate. It says:

"...That is because there afflicts them neither thirst, nor fatigue, nor hunger in the way of Allah, nor do they receive (any thing) from the enemy but a righteous deed is written for them on its account. Verily Allah does not waste the reward of the good-doers."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 121

وَلا يُنفِقُونَ نَفَقَةً صَغِيرَةً وَلا كَبِيرَةً وَلا يَقْطَعُونَ وَادِياً إِلاَّ كُتِبَ لَهُمْ لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ اللّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَاكَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

121*. "And neither do they expend anything (in the way of Holy Struggle), small or great, nor do they cross any land, but it is recorded for them, so that Allah may reward them with better than what they used to do."*

There is no expense, whether it be small or large, that the Muslims spend in charity, nor do they cross any desert, but it is recorded for them, in order that Allah will recompense them with something better than that which they have done. The verse says:

"And neither do they expend anything (in the way of Holy Struggle), small or great, nor do they cross any land, but it is recorded for them, so that Allah may reward them with better than what they used to do."

When we refer to the history of the Battles of the advent of Islam, we realize that the Muslims were confronted with a great deal of hardships and difficulties in many of those Battles. They suffered much pain because of scarcity of possibilities, martial means and equipments, provisions, and ammunitions.

They had to tolerate both thirst and hunger. Whatever they had they spent in the way of Allah. They were surrounded by some insupportable problems. They became wounded, they were slain, but they bore all of these hardships in order to protect the life of the Prophet (S) and to cause Islam victorious.

According to this verse, Allah will reward all of these pains and hardships, and He will not waste the wage of the righteous.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 122

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَآفَّةً فَلَوْلا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ

122. ***"And it is not for the believers to go out (to fight) totally; why should not then a group from every party of them go forth to become learned in religion, and to warn their people when they return to them. So that they may beware?"***

In the previous verses, the Muslims were emphatically called toward Holy Struggle, and those who offended that commandment were severely criticized. Now, this verse attracts the attention of the Muslims toward another important duty that they have. This matter is not less significant than Holy Struggle from the point of importance, because the ordinances of Allah can be learnt.

With the emphasis which was laid on Holy Struggle, the believers attached importance to Holy Struggle, and whenever a fight came forth, the Muslims wholly attended in its expedition, even though the Prophet himself (S) would not take part in that Holy Struggle, and no one offended from it.

In that circumstance, the Prophet (S) was alone and there was not anybody of those Muslims to take the ordinances of Islam from him.

This verse indicates that the entire of the believers should not go to fight, but a group of them ought to remain in Medina in order to learn the religious teachings and to be learned in religion, so that when the strivers came back to them, they could teach them what they had learnt, and could warn them and preach them, perhaps, they would be in awe of Allah and would observe the limits of the religion.

It is indisputable that the conditions are often different. Sometimes the enemy is powerful and dangerous and all Muslims must be mobilized for war, like what happened in the Battle of Tab�k where the Muslims were against the powerful army of Byzantine.

And, sometimes it happens that the enemy is less powerful and it is not necessary that the Muslims totally participate in war.

When the Prophet (S) was alive, it was in such circumstances that a group of the Muslims should go to

fight and another group would remain at the presence of the Prophet (S) busy learning the subjects of the religion.

For, at any moment, the revelation might be sent down and an ordinance or a new subject be announced by the Prophet (S). So, there should be present some believers to receive it and to learn it, and when their brethren would return from Holy Struggle, they could teach it to them, too.

In that manner, the strivers could also be in the current of that revelation which would firm their Faith and might create a higher standard of piety and God-fearing in them.

The verse says:

"And it is not for the believers to go out (to fight) totally; why should not then a group from every party of them go forth to become learned in religion, and to warn their people when they return to them. So that they may beware?"

This holy verse clearly indicates to the importance of knowledge in Islam. It is found out that the value of learning and teaching is not less than the value of Holy Struggle. Then, when a party of faithful people go to Holy Struggle and fight against the enemy of Islam, another party should also remain in the intrenchment of knowledge and acquaintance in order to obtain it.

The verse under discussion can also be rendered into another form. The content meaning of the verse can be considered as some facts related to the Muslims who lived in other cities and the tribes who were far from Medina.

In this case, we may say that the verse indicates that there were some Muslims who lived in some other places and they should not go to fight totally, but a party of them ought to travel to Medina and attend the presence of the Holy Prophet (S) in order to learn the ordinances of the religion.

After that, they could return to their people and preach them those ordinances.

There seems another probability denoting that basically the verse is not related to Holy Struggle, since there is not any word mentioned in the verse concerning Holy Struggle. It only implies that the whole believers should not go out, but a group from every party of them would travel and learn the lessons of religion.

Perhaps, the objective meaning is that, at the time of the Prophet (S) and after the expansion of Islam among different tribes, whoever embraced Islam wished to meet the Prophet (S) and to learn Islam directly from him, which caused a trouble.

So, the verse commands such believers that they did not need to go totally to Medina to attend the presence of the Prophet (S), but a group of them were sufficient to come and learn the lessons of the religion and return to their people in order to teach those lessons to them.

Section 16: Effects of the Guidance Revealed

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 123

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُم مِّنَ الْكُفَّارِ وَلْيَجِدُوا فِيكُمْ غِلْظَةً ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

123. *"O' you who have Faith! Fight those of the infidels who are near to you, and let them find severity in you, and know that Allah is with the pious ones."*

In the life of the Prophet of Islam, the Muslims had many enemies. Some of those enemies lived in a long distance from the Muslims, like the Romans who were in Syria, Palestine, and Tabūk. But, some of other enemies of the Muslims were not so far from the center of Islam.

For, example, the tribes of Hawāzin and Thaqif were in a little distance from the Muslims and they were a danger in ambush. It was necessary that at first the near enemies should be crushed, and then the far distanced enemies might be dealt with, because their danger was greater and they could be aware of the secrets and martial abilities of the Muslims.

In this holy verse, the Qur'ān notifies to the Muslims of this very matter. It says:

"O' you who have Faith! Fight those of the infidels who are near to you, and let them find severity in you, and know that Allah is with the pious ones."

To show violence of action in front of an enemy the strivers may make him both frightened and disappointed. He understands that the Muslims are not penetrable, and they may not be deceived by some mere promises, nor that they can get the martial secrets from them.

A believer should have the ultimate humility and modesty in front of his religious brethren, but he must be severe, firm and violent in front of enemies, as the Qur'ān says:

"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those with him are firm of heart against the unbelievers, compassionate among themselves..." (***Surah Al-Fath, No. 48, verse 29***)

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 124

وإِذَا مَآ أُنْزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَمِنْهُم مَن يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هَذِهِ إِيمَاناً فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَاناً وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

124. *"And whenever a Surah is sent down, there are some of them* (*the hypocrites*) *who say:*

‘Which of you did this increase in belief?’. As for those who have Faith, it increases them in belief and they rejoice.”

The hypocrites always and in any opportunity tried to weaken the spirit of the Muslims. One of their methods was that they used to mock the verses of the Qur’ān in order to both disturb their sacredness and hurt the Muslims.

This verse states the indecent reaction of the hypocrites at the time of the revelation of a Surah of the Qur’ān. Whenever a Surah was revealed, some of them mockingly asked some others whether that Surah increased in belief of either of them. By that manner, they wanted to mock the Muslims among themselves.

After narrating this meaning, the Qur’ān gives them a suitable answer, which is recited in the next verse.

Whenever a Surah of the Qur’ān was sent down, there were created two reactions in the believers and two other reactions in the hypocrites. Every couple of those reactions were just opposite to each other. The reaction of the believers before the revelation of a Surah of the Qur’ān was two things:

The first was that it increased in the belief of them and made their Faith firm.

This statement indicates that belief can be both decreased and increased, and the revelation of the Qur’ān causes the belief to be increased in the receptive believing hearts.

The second was that it made them happy. When they heard the verses of the Qur’ān, and they were aware of the great rewards which were mentioned in them for the believers, they rejoiced and they became hopeful that they would be included in the favours of Allah.

The verse says:

“And whenever a Surah is sent down, there are some of them (***the hypocrites***) ***who say: ‘which of you did this increase in belief?’. As for those who have Faith, it increases them in belief and they rejoice.”***

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 125

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَرَضٌ فَزَادَتْهُمْ رِجْساً إِلَى رِجْسِهِمْ وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ

125. ***“And as for those in whose hearts is a sickness, it*** (***only***) ***adds filth to their filth, and they die while they are infidels.”***

If a corpse falls inside a pool, whatever much rain it rains upon it, it will become more malodorous. This bad smell is not because of the rain, but it is because of that corpse.

When there is the mood of obstinacy and haughtiness in a person, it causes that, by the revelation of the verses of the Qur'n, those in whose hearts is disease will become more haughty, and will show a more amount of obstinacy, bigotry and enmity from themselves.

This status is a kind of sickness in them like the sicknesses of the body. If we do not think of a remedy for it, it will expand so much so that may it destroy the person.

The verse says:

"And as for those in whose hearts is a sickness, it** (**only**) **adds filth to their filth, and they die while they are infidels."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 126

أَوَلا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُمْ يُفْتَنُونَ فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ مَرَّةً أَوْ مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ لاَ يَتُوبُونَ وَلاَ هُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ

126. ***"Do they not see that they are tried once or twice every year? Yet they neither repent, nor do they take admonition."***

These blind-hearted hypocrites take no counsel and take an example of nothing. They are always faced with trials, and some calamities and disasters fall upon them, but they do not come to themselves and do not take counsel.

In this holy verse, if fact, the Qur'n criticizes their inattentiveness and their unawareness. It says:

"Do they not see that they are tried once or twice every year? Yet they neither repent, nor do they take admonition."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 127

وَإِذَا مَا أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ نَّظَرَ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ هَلْ يَرَاكُم مِّنْ أَحَدٍ ثُمَّ انصَرَفُوا ۚ صَرَفَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُم بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ

127. ***"And whenever a Surah is sent down, they look at one another,** (**saying**)**: 'Does anyone see you?' Then they turn away. Allah has turned away their hearts because they are a people who do not understand."***

When the hypocrites were at the presence of the Prophet (S) and the believers, and, at the same time a Surah was revealed, they looked at each other and, by their glances and signals, they said to one another whether anyone saw them.

That is, if the Prophet (S) and the believers did not watch them, and they were neglectful of them the hypocrites might go out of that meeting in order not to listen to the recitation of the Surah.

They feared that the Surah would be about them, and it might say something of their secrets. Therefore, they wanted to leave the meeting in any way they could, and when they found the opportunity for it, they would flee. The above holy verse says:

"And whenever a Surah is sent down, they look at one another,* (*saying*)*: 'Does anyone see you?'..."

After mentioning these matters in this verse, the Qur'ān implies that Allah has turned away their hearts. That is, their hearts have turned away from the truth. The reason of this status is that they are a group of people who do not apprehend the reality and do not think correctly.

Thus, it is their own difficulty that as a result of enmity with the truth, they have brought forth such a situation for themselves, and Allah (s.w.t.) has turned away their hearts because of their own deeds. The verse says:

"...Then they turn away. Allah has turned away their hearts because they are a people who do not understand."

As if the hypocrites do not take any admonishment from the holy verses of the Qur'ān. They are, for example, like a consumed lamp that whatever it be contacted to electricity it does not work.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 128

لَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَاعَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

128*. "There has indeed come to you a messenger from among yourselves. Grievous to him is whatever afflicts you; he is full of concern for you* (*your guidance*)*, and most kind and merciful to the believers."*

These holy verses are very important from the point of sympathy, because they express several significant specialties concerning the Holy Prophet of Islam (S).

In the first verse, which addresses all Muslims, the Qur'ān refers to four attractive epithets of the Prophet of Islam.

1. It says that this Prophet is from among yourselves. He is not of the kind of angels, but he is of your kind and, like you, he eats, sleeps, and lives.

He is not a prince or a person born in a wealthy family who can not perceive your toils and pains. He is

from among you and has grown up in the same lanes and quarters where you have familiar intercourse.

2. Whatever afflicts you is grievous to him, too. That is, the hardships and afflictions that reach you, he takes them upon him, and he knows your sadness as his own sadness. Therefore, he becomes offended when you are annoyed, because he thinks of you as ones from himself and vice versa.

3. He is found of you and he is compassionate to you. He desires that you obtain the felicity of both this world and the next, so that whatever goodness exists becomes yours. He is desirous for your success and happiness.

4. He is very kind and merciful to the believers, and loves those believers who have truly embraced his religion.

As it was said in the above, these epithets are all attractive and move the feelings. They inform of the deep relation and immense attachment of the Prophet of Islam (S) toward his community, (ummah).

Thus, as the Qur'ān denotes, the Prophet (S) is the best example for you, then Muslims must have the same relations and attachments among themselves and think of themselves as the share of the sorrows and happinesses of each other.

It should be noted that the Prophet (S) has been introduced in this verse as a 'kind and merciful' messenger. These two epithets are among the attributes of Allah, with a difference that the Prophet (S) is 'kind and merciful' to the believers, while Allah is kind and merciful to all human beings. The Qur'ān says:

"…verily Allah is to mankind Most Affectionate, Most Merciful." (***Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 143***)

Allah has based the foundation of creation on kindness and mery, and, originally, He is kind to all mankind. The evidence of this meaning is the vast possibilities which He has bestowed upon His servants in order that they, enjoying the present bounties, pave the path of Allah and follow the religion of prophets.

But, if a person turns away from Allah and His prophets, in fact he has turned away himself from the vast mercy of Allah. But, from the very beginning, the kindness and mercy of the Prophet (S) have been attached to the believers, and he who is not in the straight way does not accept it from the very beginning.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 129

فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللّهُ لآ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

129. ***"So if they turn away, say: 'Allah is sufficient for me. There is no god but He. In Him I have put my trust and He is the Lord of the great 'Arsh."***

The Lord Who controls the great system of existence, can hold man, a little creature, under His Own compassions, too.

People's arrogance and desistance must not affect your Faith and spiritualities, because whoever is with Allah has everything.

It is recited in the supplication of 'Arafah that Imam Hussayn (as), addressing Allah, says:

"O' Lord! He who did find You, what did he miss, and he who is in lack of You, what does he have?"

Therefore, the secret of solving problems is confidence in Allah. In this verse, Allah says to His Prophet (S):

"So if they turn away, say: 'Allah is sufficient for me. There is no god but He. In Him I have put my trust and He is the Lord of the great 'Arsh."

The Prophet (S) said these phrases from the depth of his heart (soul). It was by this high spirit that he conquered the highest peaks of dignity, and possessed the greatest rank that a godly human being can ever obtain.
